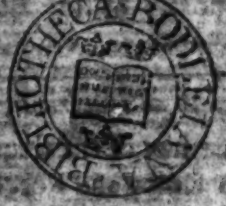
BIBLIOTHECA ROMEI

To the Baptized Disciples not under laying on of Hands, is heartily wished the true knowledge of God, and sincere Love, with submission to the whole Doctrine of Christ, desired in the way of Truth.

WHen we first saw your Book, read the Title, and how you pretend your Questions are for Conscience sake; we thought Silence for some time would be the best Answer, considering what hath formerly past between us about the Difference still depending, and the present face of things, as they now shew themselves in the world.

But when we came to take a view of your Epistle, finding it writ by some Spirit inraged, rather than one desirous of satisfaction from any serious, sober, conscientious scruple, or doubt, We were invited the more to consider your Questions; and finding them to strike at the root, fill'd with animosity, taunting and insulting terms, rather than a spirit so much as sprinkled with conscious, candid, and serious aims, though you give your selves the name, as the obscure Parents of this (in some

ſenſe) abortive Child of the Lovers of Truth and Peace, which beſpeaks the Babe both conceived and brought forth under the melevolent Aſpects of ſome froward contentious (and yet pretended glorious and Chriſtian) deſign.

Your Epiſtle, which as the Midwife that brought the Child into the world, we find uſhers it in with calumniations ſo foul, and of ſuch a ſort, as if it were intended to ſcale Rome's Walls, and bid Defiance to the Man there that uſurps the Keyes of Heaven and Hell.

And withal, that way may be made for its more laudable entrance and progreſs, ſhe no ſooner ſpeaks, but, like Athalia, ſhe cryes Treaſon, treaſon, (the Lord's Prerogative is invaded) when alas, ſhe was the Traytor her ſelf; and then ſhe marcheth on, and proclaims them (ſhe is ſent to with ſo much pretended calmneſs) to be like the Man at Rome, uſurpers of the Keyes of Hell and Death.

But how much the mark is miſſed is evident enough, for who more free and ready to ſtop up the way to Hell, and open the way to Heaven, ſo far as lies in them, by all the abilities they have, and endeavours they can uſe, than they whom you brand with the aforeſaid Uſurpation. Though we would not make the road to Heaven as the fooliſh Woman and clamourous doth the way to her Houſe, ſaying Stolen waters are ſweet, and bread eaten in ſecret is pleaſant, to her gueſts.

And though your Babes-Uſher hath got the knack

on'

n't to clamour with so much scurrility, by such oyly lines, perhaps borrowed from some other Pen, yet is it an argument of a weak Cause rather than otherwise, it being usual, when there is no better weapons to make use of such, with this gloss, The Lords Prerogative is invaded, *and* what wilt thou do to thy great Name? *and the like; when you your selves are the invaders of that Royal Prerogative of the Lord's Anointed, by not suffering his Princely Authority to be obeyed without controule from you; and such his leige People to whom his Prerogative and Name is more dear than their lives, as sufficient testimony hath been given, and further may through his grace, should he call for it. You study against wayes of obstruction.*

But how easie a matter is it for men to pretend to Conscience in their own Case, and with the same Pen, bespatter the Consciences of others with foul inormities of meer pretences under that cloak, as if they made bates, and pretended Conscience; but let the sober inspect this new-born Babe, and they will see make-bate writ in the face of him, though it hath Conscience for its Name, and is surnamed a Lover of Truth and Peace; and do but trace it in its proceedings, and let but its conception be calculated, and they will find it both conceived and brought forth to that end, it being furnished with Confidence sufficient to pass it without suspition of being tardy of any such thing as make-bate, while it can talk of Peace and Unity among Bre-

thren, and pretend to more than ordinary zeal to it; and that it may go abroad without jealousie of the contrary, all that stands in its way, must be rendred as maintainers of Notions, catch'd up and charged upon Conscience, without regard had to the interest of Religion, yea, and renting and running away from all that agree not with them, when there is nothing less intended by you, than to run divisions among us that are united in that thing under debate.

And for the more effectual accomplishment of this design, we must also be rendred as such that take upon them to judge all that come not up to the same dimensions with us, not to have God, not to have communion with God, when our judgment in that case is, Those that transgress and abide not in the Doctrine of Christ, have not God as his Church hath; not that thereby you or any man is judged by us, to have, or not to have God: And as for you, we have before given our Testimony, that we can, and do love you for the Truths sake you own, so far as you have gone, or so far as you do own the Truth; but we cannot, nay we dare not love you with the love of Brethren in the true and right order of the Gospel. See Gods Oracle, and Christs Doctrine, page 94. then have you no cause to render us, as judging us but our selves in no state to have God, nor communion with God.

And if you have better Arguments to prove your interest in Christ than laying on of Hands, we

have

have no cause to grieve at it, but to rejoyce; and can with all our hearts wish you have; for laying on of Hands can be none for you, (and it will be well if it be none against you) who have so long opposed us with so much bitterness, as you have done, and and still do. But be we esteemed your Friends or your Enemies, for saying, you are not a Church rightly Constituted, and so have not God as his Church; we must still say it, until our Judgments and Consciences be otherwise perswaded by his Word; and if you will not believe what we say, we must leave it to the revelation of the righteous Judgment of the Lord, who will then make the decision of that, and also of your uncharitable judgment of us, That if we could execute all (as you say) we condemn, then who shall be saved? you had as well said, none; though thanks be to God we have our testimony on high, how much we have laboured and travelled for the Salvation of Souls; nor have you any cause to say, The Devil may have a Writ of Ease from any Judgment or Practice of ours; for, to the praise of God we speak it, we have been by him made Instruments to turn men from Darkness to Light, and from the power of Satan to God, and not a few: but if any do give the Devil a Writ of Ease, and bring Prey to the Den of that great Devourer, it is more like to be you that seek to keep men from the Truth, and that leave no stone unturned, to draw them that are in it, to the

like dis-esteem you your selves have of it: And indeed, before you had charged others with Church-dividing, you should first prove your selves to be a true Constituted Church, and then cry out against the Ignorance and Pride of those that Separated from you; but while that beam is in your eye, how can you discern aright the moat in anothers? for as the Devil can dance at discord, so he can dance at concord, in confusion and disorder; when Unity is kept in Iniquity and Error, nothing can please the Father of Lyes better, promote his interest, enlarge his kingdom, and give a more secure Writ of Ease than that will; and therefore, if he be no better furnished, than where Unity is kept with Truth, and Unity in Iniquity, and Error is avoided, he may go look for Men and Arms where he can find them; for where Unity and Truth are together, and Truth and Unity are individuals, he will find none: And what will lay the Church more open to ruine and spoyle, than Unity in Error and Sin? and who, that is a Christian, can rejoyce in such Trophies? the Devil shall gain by such victories, yea will Church-divisions do much, and cause her Enemies to triumph; let them take it to themselves that are guilty thereof: Men in such cases most times miss the mark, and lay not the saddle on the right horse, but satisfie and please themselves by charging others with that they want proof of, that so the Plea for themselves may the better

pass for Not guilty, by crying up lawful Separation to be Church-Renting, and a wounding Christs Body. And who will sooner reflect the want of Knowledge, and Pride, than such who are proud, knowing nothing, but doting about Questions? 1 Tim 6.3,4.

And how many men might silently go to their Graves without noise, had they not secured their Names, and in some kind their Reputation, by such doing ways, and contendings against Truth, by branding others with the infamous character of Church-breaking? And while they do this, kindle a Fire to themselves, and then delight in the sparks thereof; withal reflecting the guilt of it on others, being ambitious that none are so holy, humble, and wise as they: and besides, think it their duty to sacrifice in the flame of their own fire, all their abilities and parts, to promote their intended designs; not standing much upon it, if to help forward the Work they venture to adde a little Hypocrisie, that with fair words and feigned speeches, they might the better deceive the hearts of the simple: And that by stigmatizing others with the name of foolish Builders, and unskilful Physitians, you (like Absalom) might get in place your selves; and while you pity the state of others in this defect, crave the work your selves, as Builders, and the Cure, as Physitians, who yet have not attained the skill to lay a foundation. And if your skill to cure, be no

better

better than to build; there's but small hopes for them that imploy you, but to be destroyed by your Building, and to die by your Practice.

And most sure it is, that this will be the issue, if such unskilful Builders and Physicians be courted as they have been by some, to lend their assistance and advice: whose pride and interest is such, that will not suffer them to be controul'd in their work; since their hearts are so stout, and their conceits of themselves are so high, that they will not indure that should be amended, which they have unskilfully built. What will then an agreement to joyn with you, to build & to cure (though stiled happy) prove, but little better than destruction, and a languishing under an incurable disease, whose Reputation will not admit of any Regulation, that have so long made opposition against the true Rules of sure and safe Building? And then how shall they become Truths Professors, that have rejected it so long, without assuming the guilt of what they stand charged with, which may expose them to reject Conviction, rather than lose their Credit and Reputation? For which they must say, we make causless Separation, hating them, and casting them out, when none they charge are guilty of the one, nor of the other, as the Answers to your Questions will inform you; which we present to your serious Consideration; believing that Peace is the blessing of the most High, when Truth and Purity joyn hands with it. And O how happy

a thing, and desirable, is such a Peace and Unity! And how much longed for! But ah! when will it once be? How can this so desirable a thing be hoped for, while Truth and You stand at a distance? Your subjection to Christ, in owning and obeying that sacred Appointment of his, which you have made such opposition against, may heal the Breach, by which you will be baptized into one Body with us; and so you and we may grow up together a Temple and holy Habitation of God through the Spirit.

J. G.

THE

The Searchers for Schism searched.

MEeting with a small Book called *A Search for Schism*, and finding with what specious and glorious pretences it comes forth, and how reproachfully, yea and falsly the Authors thereof do represent those dissenting from them; lest they should insult yet more, and trample upon that sacred Truth they contend against and oppose, We therefore thought it necessary that their Questions should be answered.

Quest. 1.

Whether a Congregation of people, that have confessed their sins, and professed their Faith in Christ for the pardon of them, and thereupon are baptized; resolving by Gods assistance further to believe, do, and suffer what they shall from time to time understand to be according to the Will of God; We demand whether a people so qualified and congregated, ought not to be esteemed a Church of Christ, and Members in particular? 1 Cor. 12. 13.

Answer.

Before we come to answer, it will be necessary

sary that we observe some few things which lie hid in this Question.

1. That the difference depending between you and us, is about laying on of hands on baptized Believers, as such.

2. That you at the present are ignorant; and do not understand laying on of hands to be your duty, according to the will of God, to submit to.

3. That if you did understand (as aforesaid) laying on of hands to be according to the will of God your duty, you would do it.

4. And you being thus qualified, [illegible] and whether you ought not to be esteemed a [illegible] of Christ?

These things premised, we now answer.

1. How can you be ignorant that laying on of hands is your duty to do, when one of you, and one that is esteemed eminent among you for parts and knowledge, yea, and one of the chief, if not the alone Author of your *Search*, did not very long since receive laying on of hands upon the same ground, and to the same end we practise it; giving of it first under his own hand, as is still to be seen.

2. Can he then be ignorant that laying on of hands is his duty to do, according to the will of God, when he shall submit to it as to one of the first Rudiments of Christianity? Either he did submit with understanding, or he offered the

Sacrifice

Sacrifice of Fools, which know not what they do; or did he design to deceive the Brethren that administred Prayer and laying on of hands upon him, that so he might be the better able, (being now admitted a Member of a Congregation under laying on of hands) and with the less suspition, to undermine that part of the Foundation on which the House was built? To say he did as Fools do, would be too saucy a reflection; to say he received laying on of hands designedly, would proclaim that action of his rather Jesuitical than Christian, and conclude him notorious for Hypocrisie.

3. How can it be thought he should not understand prayer and laying on of hands to be a foundation-Principle of the Doctrine of Christ, when he hath more than once in the presence of many people confess'd it so to be, and at length confest it under his hand, & submited to the practise thereof, as one of the first Rudiments (to use his own terms) of Christianity?

4. But suppose he nor you understand not laying on of hands to be your duty according to the will of God, will it follow that therefore you ought to be esteemed a Church of Christ rightly and duely constituted? *&c.* We believe that there are many that sprinkle their Children (whose Confession of Sin, and Profession of Faith in Christ, we and you can own) that you have so much Charity for; that did they believe

it

it to be the duty of Believers only to be bapt
zed, and not Children, they would submit
Baptism themselves, and never sprinkle, n
own sprinkling of Babes more: Will this giv
you sufficient ground to esteem them a Churc
of Christ? You will say, No: And why no
Because they are not baptized according to th
will of God, and Baptism is one Principle
the Doctrine of Christ, *Heb.*6.2. Even so s
we, having so much Charity for some of you
that did you understand laying on of hands
be your duty to submit to, according to the wil
of God, you would do it: yet may you not b
esteemed a right constituted Church, thoug
you have obeyed one Principle of the Doctrin
of *Christ* more than they which sprinkle thei
Babes, and are right in Faith and Repentance
because you are not under laying on of hand
which also is one Principle of Christs Doctrine
*Heb.*6.1,2. Ignorance will be no excuse, whe
Knowledge may be had; we may not own yo
a true constituted Church for your Igno
rance.

5. If you be ignorant that laying on of hand
is your duty to submit to, where is the fault
Not in God, *He giveth liberally, and upbraideth not, Jam.*1.5. nor in his Word, *that is able to make a man wise to Salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus, 2 Tim.*3.15. Is it not written in the Scriptures of Truth, and hath it not been

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asserted both by preaching and printing, as you your selves know and say. Insomuch that the Light of this Truth (had you not rejected it) might have shined into your hearts, long ere this day, and you brought to the knowledge of the mind of Christ. If they have not enlightened you, who knows? since no answer hath been given by you to those Books wherein Laying on of Hands hath been asserted; especially * considering that you have been invited to answer them, with a promise, that the mistake and error should be acknowledged, when you should prove laying on of hands to be no Principle of Christs Doctrine.

* *See Gods Oracle, and Christs Doctrine*, p. 91.

6. You do not onely seem to plead ignorance, but you give us to understand that you are resolved to believe, do, and suffer what from time to time shall be made known unto you, *&c.* further than your present attainments. The words are good words, it's true; but how can they agree with your practice? For from before the time we departed from you, down to this day, you have been constant and unwearied opposers of laying on of hands, speaking evil of the way, disputing publickly against it, and now lastly make opposition in your *Questions for Conscience-sake*, as you pretend, with scurrilous and taunting expressions, as in several

places doth appear, which makes it not easie to be believed, that if you are ignorant you desire to understand, or understanding, resolve to do as you say you will.

7. Will resolving to do the Will of God when known in a fundamental, give you the esteem of a Church of Christ rightly Constituted? if you, then it will give others we hope in your eyes the like esteem that are short of you in one principle of Christs Doctrine, as you are of us in another; and if so, then ought you to esteem those in the *Presbyterian* and *Independant* way, especially those of them that believe Christ died for all, as you do, between whom there is no fundamental difference but in Baptism of Water, and that only too about the subject and manner of Baptizing; and no doubt but they are as ready to attest their resolution to own and submit to Baptism as Believers, or any other thing whatsoever, shall from time to time be made known to them, according to the will of God, as you are, or can be.

8. And whereas you say you are not only resolved to believe, and do, but also to suffer, &c.

Your actions, some of you, and those some, none of the meaneſt for place and parts, will rather speak the contrary; witness their freeing of themselves from the yoke of Suffering by sinful

sinful swearing, out-living their Testimony for Christ, preferring the world and their interest therein above his righteous Cause.

9. We then have cause to doubt, whether you are ignorant as you insinuate, and so resolved as you say; but if you are, we thus answer your demand, That it is not any Peoples resolving to believe, do, and suffer, what hereafter shall be made known to them, &c. but the knowing and doing what is according to the Will of God, that will make them a right constituted Church, and Members in particular, though you are, or may be esteemed baptized Disciples.

Quest. 2.

Whether any other qualifications, &c. viz. then is set down in the first Question, are required of God, as pre-requisits to Church Communion, and Church Membership; if so, shew us what those things are, and where they are so required?

Answer.

1. If we should grant, as we do not, that God requires no other qualification than what you mention, as pre-requisits to Church Communion; yet have you not found the Schism, but must search nearer home for it, if you intend to find it; because you are not the men so qualified as you intimate you be, as may well be perceived without secret search by any, let but those qualifications you speak of, be com-

pared with the actions of those, time after time, that are of highest esteem amongst you.

2. But if you were qualified, as you say you are, yet will not that prove you a Church whose Constitution is right; for God requires laying on of hands, which is one Principle of the Doctrine of Christ, and one of the first rudiments of Christianity, as you have confessed, as pre-requisits to Church Communion; But then you demand, where God requires it as a pre-requisit to Church Communion: We then demand of you, where God requires Water Baptism as a pre-requisite to Church Communion? If you shall say that Baptism is one Principle of Christs Doctrine; so is laying on of Hands, as well as Baptism, numbred among the principles of Christs Doctrine, *Heb.*6.1,2. But if you shall say, that there is more in the Scripture to be said for Water Baptism, than there is for laying on of Hands; we say, if there be more said for Baptism in the Scripture than is for laying on of Hands, all that is said cannot make it more than a foundation principle, and so is laying on of hands.

3. What if there be more said in the Scripture for Faith towards God, than is for Baptism of Water, as there is in many things agreeing to it, yet is it no more than a foundation principle of Christs Doctrine, and so is the Doctrine of Baptism, *Heb.*6.2. And will it then

follow

follow, because there is more said in Scripture for Faith towards God, than is said for the Baptism of Water, that therefore Baptism is not required of God as a pre-requisite to Church Communion; even so, should it be granted, that there is more said for Baptism, in some one thing, or more, than is for laying on of Hands, it doth not follow but that laying on of Hands being numbred by the Apostle among the foundation principles of Christs Doctrine, as well as Baptism, *Heb.* 6.2. is required of God as a pre-requisite to Church Communion, and Membership, as well as Baptism.

4. Again, where is the belief of the Resurrection of the Dead required of God as pre-requisite to Church Communion? yet is that a principle of Christs Doctrine *Heb.*6.2. and such a one, that if not owned and believed, you would not own such a People should be admitted to Church Communion and Church Membership. If you should say, that to deny the Resurrection is an Errour which makes Faith vain, and concludes us yet in our sins; we say that it is no more than a Principle of Christs Doctrine, and so is laying on of Hands, and yet you cannot shew where its required of God, *viz.* The belief of the Resurrection of the Dead, as a pre-requisite to Church Communion; it doth not therefore follow but that if

you are so qualified as you say you are, should you deny or not believe the Resurrection of the Body, that you are a Church Communicable, or Church Members; therefore there is other qualifications than those you speak of prerequisite to Church Membership and Communion.

Quest. 3.

If it shall be said, that Churches ought to be found in the knowledge and practice of all Christs Doctrines; We demand, whether the knowledge and practice of all truths be indispensably necessary to the constituting of Churches and Church Members?

Answer.

1. We say that Churches ought to be found in the knowledge of all Christs Doctrine, (not Doctrines) and so we think will you say.

2. We do not say never the more for that, that the knowledge and practice of all truths is indispensably necessary to the constituting of Churches and Church Members; for there are many truths, Churches rightly constituted, may be ignorant of; but the first Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, none ought to be ignorant of, or without the knowledge and practice, and be true constituted Churches and Church Members.

Quest. 4.

Quest. 4.

If you say the knowledge and practice of all truths is not indispensably necessary to the constituting of Churches and Church Members; then we demand, that you would define what truths the knowledge and practice whereof is so indispensably necessary as aforesaid? and what truths and practices the ignorance of, may be consistant with a true Church and Church Membership?

Answer.

1. What truths the knowledge and practice of are indispensably necessary to the constituting of Churches and Church Members, we have given you the definition of in our Answer to your 3*d Question.*

2. Those truths of highest moment, the ignorance of, may be consistent with a true Church and Church Members, are such as belong to the perfecting and compleating the Church and Church Members in Christ, which a true Church may be ignorant of in her minority; as the Hebrew Church was about many things *Paul* had to say, hard to be uttered, because they were dull of hearing, and were still as Babes, who are unskilful in the Word of Righteousness, *Heb.* 5. 11, 12, 13.

3. Those truths of less moment consistent with a true Church, are washing of Feet, saluting with a holy Kiss, taking an Oath to end

ſtrife, the matters of Apparel, and ſuch-like; and who pray makes theſe things the Eſſentials of Communion, though you falſly ſay they are ſo made; no Congregation in *England* as we know of.

4. Yet may the matter of Apparel give juſt cauſe of reproof when Church Members ſhall exceed the bounds of moderation, and ſobriety in their Apparel, to the grieving, wounding and offence of their fellow Brethren, and may amount to a ſin againſt Chriſt, when they ſhall ſtop their ear, and ſtiffen their necks againſt them that are ſo grieved and offended.

5. There may be many things done by Churches and Church Members, that are ſinful, which may juſtly deſerve reproof; and if not repented of, may merit the cenſure of the Church. The Angel of the Church of *Pergamos* was reproved for ſin, for having thoſe in the Church that held the Doctrine of *Balaam*, to eat meat ſacrificed to Idols, and to commit Fornication: which Fornication was mixt Marriages, as ſaith *Joſephus*, and we think his authority as good in this caſe, as you can think Dr. *Hammond*'s is in laying on of Hands.

6. The Angel of the Church of *Pergamos* is by the Spirit commanded to repent of this evil, the command backed with a commination, which proves that ſuch muſt be put out of the Church

Church that so hold, much more such which so do.

7. But laying on of Hands we do indeed make Essential to Church Communion, because it is a Principle of the Doctrine of Christ, as hath been proved now, and heretofore, and never was disproved by you, except asking questions be refutation.

Quest. 5.

We demand, whether there was not a Church of Christ in the world before his Ascention? and whether any other qualification was then *prerequisite to Church Membership, than Confession of Sins, and Faith in Christ for the remission of them together with a being Baptized into his Name, and walking in a holy life and conversation? if you say any thing else was* then *required and practised, as Essential to Church Membership, shew us what that was, and where it was so required and practised: And if you say nothing else was* then *required and practised, we demand, whether the Church of Christ was wanting of any thing* then *that was Essential to its being, whatever it might want as to its well-being? If you say it wanted nothing* then *that was Essential to its being, then we further demand how this People so continuing in Faith, Baptism and Holiness of life, could cease to be a Church of Christ after his Ascention, though they might not come up to some of those other*

others Truths, that were afterward revealed when the Spirit was made manifest, &c.

Answer.

1. We do not find that Christ before his Ascension doth give the Name or Title of Church to any, but onely calls his Followers Disciples, as we might enumerate a multitude of places in the Evangelists.

2. We find that our Lord Jesus, when *Peter* confessed that *he was the Christ the Son of the Living God*, answered *Peter*, and said, *Upon this Rock will I build my Church*: He doth not say, *I have built my Church upon this Rock*, but, *I will &c.* speaking in the future tense, Hereafter when I do build it; not that he had then built his Church, but was about the work, making all things ready as materials both for the Foundation and Building.

3. Nor is what we say destitute of good reason; for his Disciples might then confess and believe him to be the Christ, but could not believe him dead, risen, ascended, and that the Comforter was come, upon which, as upon a Rock or sure Foundation, Christ would build his Church, and hath, since his last Will and Testament is in force by his Death, *Heb.*9.16,17. for his Church now is founded upon these Basis Christ is come, and died for our Sins, according to the Scriptures; believing that we in duty ought to be baptised in his Name for the Remis-

sion

sion of them, *Act.* 2.38. & 22.16. and pray, with laying on of hands, for the gift of the Spirit, which now is come since Christ is ascended to the Father, according to his promise, *John* 16.7. to guide us into all Truth, and to be with us for ever, *John* 14.16,17. as his alone Vicar on Earth, *John* 16.13,14,15. by which Spirit we are baptised into one body, 1 *Cor.* 12. 13. believing that as he is risen from the dead, he will also raise us up at the last day, *John* 6. 40. and will come the second time sitting upon the Throne of his Glory to Judgement, and to render to every man as his work shall be. On all which, as on a Rock or Foundation, the Disciples could not be built in the time of Christs life, nor till after his Ascension, because they were not then laid, nor could not till Christ was dead, risen and ascended to the Father: Yet in the time of his Life, as his Disciples he was diligent to instruct, teach, and inform them of all these things, as such which should be done and accomplished in their due and appointed time, *viz.* after he had suffered, was risen and ascended to the Father.

But it may be objected, That Christ saith, *Mat.* 18. 17. *If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it to the Church*; there Christ calls them a Church.

That doth not follow, those being words of direction and instruction which Christ gives them

them, by which they might be guided whe they had received power from on high to pro ceed as a Church, to censure unholy and diso derly Walkers; not that they, before they wer endowed with that power from on high, were a act as a Church to censure the impenitent, no did they, as we read.

You may further object, That Christ di break Bread with them, and therefore they wer then a Church.

It is true, Christ did before his Passion insti tute the Supper, he brake the Bread, and gav it to his Disciples; but it was onely with th Twelve, the rest of the Disciples being absent then doth it not follow that the Disciples we in the capacity of a Church, because the Twelv are singled out from the rest of the Disciple which shews (excepting him that was lost) th they were taken apart from the other Disciple as those that were appointed by the Lord to b Witnesses in a more eminent way and manne than the rest, of all those things he should suffer And those whom Jesus had chosen and give commandment to, not onely by his own mout but through the Holy Ghost also, *Act.* 1.2. wh they should teach others to believe and observ *Mat.*28.20. Breaking Bread then at this tim might not be solemnized as Church-communio which ought to be when the whole Body come together, to commemorate the Body and Blo

of Christ, the one as broken, the other shed, and to shew the Lords death till he come; but rather was instituted then by Christ at the feast of the Passover, to shew them what they should after he was ascended do, & also to teach others what they should do and observe, when they were endowed with power from on high, and thereby were ensighted to all things relating to Church-Power, and the administration of all Church-Ordinances; which until they were so impowered, they were onely to wait at *Jerusalem*, *Luk.* 24.49. *Act.*1.4. If otherwise, why should the rest of the Disciples be excluded, and not called to this last Supper of the Lord? If they broke Bread as a Church, the rest of the Disciples had as much right to that Communion as the Twelve, or else the Twelve onely were the Church, and the other Disciples no part of it: And if a Church, why must they wait for power at *Jerusalem*? This we humbly and modestly offer to consideration. And as for the rest of your Queries and Demands which you multiply in this Question, they are either removed and answered, or require none further.

But (say you further) *if you shall say they wanted something while Christ was among them, essential to Communion; then we demand whether this doth not reflect a want of care in Christ, who left them so, and indeed want of understanding in those that*

say

so? For if Christ had a Church before his ascension that wanted any thing essential to its being, then it was a Church, and no Church, at the same time, which is absurd to imagine.

Let what is aboveſaid be duly and conſiderately weighed, and there will be no reflection upon Chriſt, nor ignorance in thoſe that ſay they were onely Diſciples, and not impowered as a Church before Chriſts Aſcenſion. It can reflect no want of care in Chriſt, becauſe they could not be in any other capacity than his Scholars, before the Spirit was given them; nor were they capable to receive more than what Chriſt did communicate to them, and leave with them, until the Spirit was manifeſted; *I have many things to ſay, but ye cannot bear them now, John* 16.12. Then its no reflection upon Chriſt for want of care, conſidering the time and the Diſciples incapacity to bear them then.

Not do we ſay Chriſt had a Church before his Aſcenſion (if they were a Church) that wanted any thing eſſential to its being in that diſpenſation; therefore you may keep your abſurdity till you have more occaſion.

Queſt. 6.

We demand whether thoſe qualifications that give us a Right to Baptiſm, do not give us a Right to the Lords Table?

Anſw.

Answer.

1. Those qualifications that give you a right to Baptism, do not give you a right to the Lords Table.

2. For confession of sins, and profession of Faith in Christ for the pardon of them, are qualifications that gives right to Baptism; but they do not give the person so confessing and professing, a right to the Lords Table, except he be first baptised, by your Principles and Practice, if we be not deceived by you.

Quest. 7.

We demand whether it be not sinful to make more conditions of Communion, than ever God made? And whether the imposing of any thing (though true) as the conditions of Church-membership and Communion, which God hath not made a Condition, be not to keep those out of the Church, that Christ would have in?

Answer.

1. We grant it is sinful to make more Conditions of Communion than ever God made.

2. And to impose any thing, though true, as the Condition of Church-Membership and Communion, which God hath not made a Condition, is to keep those out of the Church that Christ would have in.

Quest. 8.

If Christ hath required no other conditions of Church-

Church-Communion, than Confession of Sin, Faith Baptism, and a holy Life, whether you can by any Rule deny Communion to any that are so qualified? If so, shew that Rule.

Answer.

1. Though it be true, that Confession of sin Faith, Baptism, and an holy Life, be condition of Communion, yet are there more condition required by Christ, of Church-Communion than those: for the twelve Disciples *Paul* found at *Ephesus*, had confessed their sin, professed their faith, and were baptised, yea, and were men of holy Lives, and yet they wanted some conditions of Church-Communion.

2. For these Disciples were ignorant of the Doctrine of Baptisms, *Heb.*6.2. knew no more than the Baptism of *John*; for they had not heard whether there were a holy Ghost, or no *Act.*19.

3. They were not under laying on of hands which God had appointed as the means by which the holy Ghost was given and received both which, *viz.* the Doctrine of Baptisms and laying on of hands, are Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, *Heb.*6 2. And therefore are truly conditions of Church-Communion, as Water-Baptism, for it is by one Spirit we are all baptised into one Body, 1 *Cor.*12.13.

4. Then not to hear whether there were holy Ghost or no, as these Disciples did not,

less defect in them, than for you to hear and read there is a holy Ghost promised to as many as obey Christ, and you not believe the Baptism thereof, but oppose and reject the means by which the Baptism of the Spirit is obtained, and by which we all are baptised into one Body, is a far greater defect, and want of the conditions Christ requires of Church-Communion in you, than was in them.

5. Then can we deny Communion with you, because Christ requires more conditions of Church-Communion than you yet have; for which we have these Rules, 2 *Thess.* 3. 6. 1 *Tim.* 3. 4, 5. *Cum multis aliis.*

Quest. 9.

Whether the Baptised Congregations that are not under Laying on of hands, do not make those qualifications above mentioned, absolutely necessary to Church-communion and Church-membership? And if so, why should you refuse Communion with them?

Answer.

1. You may well make a question of it, whether you do make those qualifications you mention before, absolutely necessary to Church-communion and Church-membership, when in your sixth Question you demand, *Whether those qualifications that give you a Right to Baptism, do not give you a Right to the Lords Table?* Which importeth, That those which have a Right to

Baptism, by virtue of some qualifications, have a right to the Lords Table by virtue of the same qualifications at the same time; and if they that have a right to Baptism, have at the same time a right to the Lords Table, they may by right have Church-communion though they be not baptized.

2. Therefore we must Answer you, That we cannot tell, or we do not know, whether you do make those qualifications you mention, absolutely necessary to Church-communion, and Church-membership, because in your sixth Question, you more than seem to leave out Baptism as a qualification, which you put in elsewhere as one.

3. But if you do make all those qualifications you mention, absolute necessary to Church-communion and Church-membership, you have been already told why we refused Communion with you; it will be too much in this place to say it again.

Quest. 10,

Whether you have not at some turns, both in practice and professed agreements, owned those Churches and Church Members, that are baptized Believers as aforesaid? and if so, by what rule can you refuse to have Communion with them?

Answer.

1. It is not without cause to believe, that

is too true, that some have been daubing with untempered morter, *Ezek.* 13.10,11,12,13,14. to heal the hurt slightly, saying, Peace peace, when there was no peace, *Jer.* 6. 14, having both by practice and professed agreements, owned you for Churches rightly constituted.

2. It were well if those that have so practised and agreed, would remember from whence they are fallen, and repent, and do their first works before it be too late, and their Candlestick be removed out of its place, *Rev.* 2. 5.

3. And that their giving so much advantage to you, who oppose some part of the mind of Christ which they believe and practise, which is now taken up by you, and used as weapons against the truth they practise, doth cry aloud upon them to repent, and smite upon the thigh, saying, *What have we done?*

4. For if such practice and professed agreement be according to the will of God, wherein they have owned you Churches, and Church Members rightly constituted, Communion by no rule can be refused, but ought to be maintained and held with you.

5. But we say, whatever some have practised and professedly agreed, that you are not Churches, nor Church Members rightly constituted, because you have not yet laid all the principles of the foundation, but are wanting in some one, if not more, of the first rudiments

of Christianity, as you have confessed laying on of Hands to be; We therefore refuse Communion with you by the above-mentioned rules in our Answer to your 8th *Question.*

Quest. 11.

But if you shall deny you have so owned them, then we demand whether you that are under laying on of Hands, do not daily receive such into your Communion that have been converted and baptized by those not under laying on of Hands, without taking an account of their Faith, or baptizing them again? If it shall be answered, you do so receive them; because they had confessed their Faith, and were baptized before: then we demand whether such as you so receive were converted by, or made their confession to, and received their baptism from, the Church or the World? If you say they were the Church; how dare you separate from them you own to be Gods Church, though less perfect? If you say they were the World, they made their confession to, and did receive their baptism from, then shew us whenever God intrusted the world with, or otherwise how the world came by a power to take a Confession of Faith, and to administer a lawful Baptism? If you shall say they that Baptized them you so receive, were neither the Church nor the World; then shew us a middle state of men, that are intrusted with the lawful and due Administration of Gods Ordinances; that are neither the Church nor the World; if not, doth not this practice of yours

declare

declare you own those for a Church of Christ, that are not under laying on of Hands? &c.

Answer.

1. We confess that we which are under laying on of hands, have received to laying on of hands, and then to Communion, some from you not under laying on of hands; nor did we take account of their Faith, nor baptize them again, because we were satisfied in both, not inquiring who converted them, thinking that not material, so they were converted.

2. To your next demand, we say, They were neither Baptized by the Church, nor the World, but by Disciples; and therefore we dare to separate from you, though not from them that God owns for his Church, though they should be less perfect.

3. To your third demand, we say, Men and Women may be converted and baptized, and yet they that convert and baptize them, neither the Church, nor the World.

4. *Philip* (*Acts* 8.) converted and baptized the *Samaritans* and the *Eunuch*, but *Philip* was neither the Church nor the World; But you will say, *Philip* was a Member and a Deacon of the true Church; 'tis true, he was: but then *Apollos*, who taught diligently the things of the Lord at *Ephesus*, and elsewhere 'and its beyond a supposition to say, the twelve Disciples, *Acts* 19. were baptized by him; but if not by

him, by some other, whose attainments were no more than his) and he, if he did not baptize them, might as lawfully, as teach the things of the Lord, and by as good authority might Baptize them as they that did, if he did not; and he was neither the Church, nor a Member rightly Constituted; for he at that time knew only the Baptism o *John*, *Acts* 18.25.

5. So the Men and Women *Philip* Baptized at *Samaria*, were not a Church complete in their constitution, though they had confessed their sins, believed and were baptized, but were thereby made materials fit, and framed ready to be put into the Building, which the Apostles *Peter* and *John* were sent by the rest of the Apostles from *Jerusalem* to do, who prayed and laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost, *Acts* 8. 14. then were *they all Baptized by one Spirit into one Body*, according to 1 *Cor.* 12, 13. before which they were not a Church, nor Church-members according to right and true Church-constitution; nor were they the World, because they were Believers baptized. So in like manner, the twelve Disciples *Paul* found it *Ephesus*, *Acts* 19. were not a Church, because they were not baptized by that one Spirit into one Body, nor were they and *Apollo*'s the World; because they were Believers baptized, they are said to be Disciples, *Acts* 19. 1.

6. Then

6. Then is there a middle-state of men, that were neither the Church, nor the World, that were entrusted with the lawful & due Administrations of some of God's Ordinances, as *Apollos*, who taught and baptized; or if he did not baptize, yet some other did, no more authorized than he; and if one might lawfully, an hundred might by the same rule that were in no other capacity than he.

7. Then doth not our practice in receiving some that you have converted and baptized, as afore, declare we own you for Churches that are not under laying on of hands.

8. And whereas you again demand, *Whether it was not agreed on at a general Meeting of Elders, That such as believe and are baptized, were in the account of the Scripture to be estimated a Church:* We say, we know of no general Meeting of Elders where any such thing was ever agreed, though we are apt enough to believe, that at a meeting of some Elders there have been such non-scriptural agreements made.

9. But such agreements you speak of, make work for Repentance, let them be made by whom they will; and well may it be said of those Elders that make such agreements, as was once said of the Hebrew Church, they *have need that one teach them again which be the first Principles of the Oracles of God.* Heb. 5. 12.

10. And to your demand, *Whether it hath not been permitted by, and practised among us, that those which are under laying on of Hands, may and do lawfully marry with those that are not under laying on of Hands?* We say, it hath been so permitted and practised; and since from thence you demand, *Whether this was not, and is not esteemed by us a marrying in the Church, and in the Lord?* We say, that it is not a marrying in the Church, though we say it may be a marrying in the Lord; since Believers baptized may be out of the World, and in the Lord, though not a right and true Church-state constituted according to the pattern Christ appointed: The *Samaritans* that believed and were baptized, and *Apollos*, and those twelve Disciples mentioned afore, were in the Lord, yet not a Church, as hath been shewed. Thus you see we do not own you a Church in the Lord, therefore you may spare your last demand, (*Whether it be not prodigiously absurd to own you a Church in the Lord*) till we do own you a Church in the Lord, and yet deny you a Church in the Lord. And whereas you say, *you have Members fit to make us husband & wives:* Truly, not so fit neither, as we could and do desire our Members would make choice of; however not so fit as to be Church-Members at the Lord's Table.

Quest. 12.

Quest. 12.

If a People congregated upon profession of Faith, Baptism, and a Holy life, be a Church of God, and God requireth no other conditions in order to the constituting of Churches and Church-members, as appears by the light of the former questions, and your own practice and confession at some turns, when we demand, whether he that first separated, and those with him, did not make a separation from such a Church? and whether such a separation from the Communion of, or disowning Communion with such a Church, be not to make Divisions and Schism in the Body of Christ?

Answer.

1. We have already shewed you, that such a People, no otherwise qualified than you are, cannot be a Church rightly constituted; and that God doth require more conditions than you have in order to the right constituting of Churches, and Church-members.

2. Nor doth it appear by any light your questions give, that you have a true Church state; for had we no other light to walk by, in finding out a right constituted Church, than your questions, we should be in the dark, stumble, and fall, as many of late have done, the more it's to be lamented.

3. Nor doth it appear that you are a Church rightly constituted, never the more for what some

some back-sliders have practised, and confes
at some turns.

4. You may well call them *turns*, for t
they are indeed; for had they not turned f
the truth, as they were taught, and as they
believed, and as the Truth is in Jesus, t
had never so practised, and confessed, as
say they have.

5. Then he that first separated from you;
those with him, did not separate from
Church, whose Constitution is according to
will of Christ.

6. And then separation from you, and
owning Communion with you, whose Chur
state is not true, is not to make Divisions
Schisms in the body. For,

7. The Apostle *Paul*, after he had laid h
on the twelve he found at *Ephesus*, *went into*
Synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of t
Months, disputing and perswading the th
concerning the Kingdom of God, Acts 19. 8.

8. He that separated from you, and t
with him (after they were under Laying o
Hands) continued disputing and persuad
the things concerning the Kingdom of G
for more than the space of three months.

The Apostle *Paul*, *when divers were ha*
and believed not, but spake evil of that way be
the multitude, departed from them, and sepa
the Disciples, vers. 9.

10.

10. So he that ſeparated from you, when ers of you were hardened and believed not, ſpake evil of that way before the multitude, ing, Laying on of hands was an invention the Devil; *Such a one's hands were holy, and ld keep their heads warm*; with ſuch-like as t) departed from you, and ſeparated the ſciples.

Queſt. 13.

Whether or no to deny Communion, or not to re-ve ſuch ſo qualified into Communion (as afore-d) doth not ſavour of pride, ſingularity, and un-haritableneſs? And whether this doth not ſympa-ze with the ſpirit of Diotrephes, *who did not ly refuſe to receive the Brethren, but forbid thoſe t would?* 3. John 9.

Anſwer.

1. For thoſe under laying on of hands to de-Communion, and not to receive ſuch into ommunion no otherwiſe qualified than you e, doth not ſavour of pride, ſingularity, nor charitableneſs, becauſe your Church-conſti-ion is not right.

2. If ſo, it hath no ſympathy with the ſpirit *Diotrephes* to refuſe communion with you, to forbid thoſe that would: But it may be ide, hardneſs of heart, and unbelief in you, the cauſe you ſtoop not to Chriſt, but do ll perſiſt in making oppoſition againſt a Prin-ple of his Doctrine, as you have done, and now

Queſt.

Quest. 14.

Whether all that maintain such a Sepa from any Congregations that do believe in C and are baptised, and walk holily, as aforesa not guilty of Schism, and the sin of Diotre *aforementioned?*

Answer.

This is much the same with the last que therefore we shall say onely this, That ne all, or any which maintain a Separation from upon the grounds we do, are guilty of Sc or the sin of *Diotrephes*; for we maintai Separation from Churches, nor Church-M bers rightly constituted.

Quest. 15.

Whether we who you have separated from, denied Communion to, have not used all Chr and candid ways of Accommodation, that ca sonably be thought on? Have we not profes you, That if we saw laying on of hands (in th you practise it) a Duty, we would submit t Have we not also declared, That we are willi the better finding out the Truth, that you come and preach it among us? Have we not promised that we would never preach or d against it, to avoid offending of you? Nay, we not practised this, by suffering your Co Elders freely to preach among us, who preach your practice, without any opposition from us? further, have not many desired to come under

on of hands, if you would not make it the bounds conditions of Communion, and tie them from ing us, or having Communion with us afterds? Whether then to refuse Communion with after such large and loving Condescensions as e, be not Schism greatly aggravated?

Answer.

1. We believe you have of late used ways of commodation, (as you call them) but whe- Christian and candid, we have cause to ect: When one of you shall desire hands t be imposed on him by the Elders, upon confession given under his own hand, *viz. se may therefore certifie that I do believe the trine of laying on of hands, mentioned* Heb. 6. *one of the first Rudiments of Christianity*; yet now he is one of the chief Opposers of laying on of hands which he prophanely (to no more) submitted to: Which how Chri- and candid he therein was, may easily be erned by any.

2. What if you have professed, that if you laying on of hands to be a duty, in the way practise it, you would submit to it? Will make your Church-state true? It is more probable that those in the Presbyterian and pendant way, are as ready candidly to pro- That did they see Baptism as you and we tise it, and laying on of hands also, to be uty, they would submit to both; doth it follow

follow that your separation and ours from t
is Schism?

3. And what if you have declared that
are willing for the better finding out of T
(as you pretend) that some under laying o
hands should come and preach it among y
Will that heal your sore, and give you a r
and due Church-constitution?

4. And if you have promised never to pr
nor dispute against it, and if you have prac
so, by suffering some Countrey Elders free
preach it among you, without any oppos
from you; will these things you call condes
tions, make you a right constituted Chu
that wanted a right constitution before?
sides, these condescentions might be ju
Christian and candid as his was, that desire
come under laying on of hands, confessing
be one of the first Rudiments of Christia
mentioned afore.

5. For there is cause to suspect that t
condescentions of yours were (rather than C
stian and candid) designs to raze out that
of the Foundation, *viz.* Laying on of h
that is, raze out the belief and practice of
time, or divide them about it that are und
as appears by what some of you have said at
certain times, *viz. That in seven years hi
should not have that esteem of laying on of ha
now we have*: And another at another
sh

uld say, *That the Churches would ſtand with rs in their eyes for their acting.* Theſe conde- tions then, we ſay, rather tended to the ing laying on of hands, and the eſteem of out of their hearts that have ſubmitted to it, ſo the practice of it might periſh and die in e; or if not ſo in all, yet then to cauſe a ceſſity of dividing about it, as great Preten- s as you be to Peace and Unity, that there- you might hide your diſobedience to Chriſt, ſo paſs for currant a right-conſtituted urch.

6. What if ſome of you have deſired to come der laying on of hands? If they will make ful conditions, and bring them to us with ir deſire, we then have juſt cauſe to keep em from ſo ſacred an Ordinance as laying on hands is, until they ſhall come to the obedi- ce thereof, upon *Chriſts* terms and conditi- , denying themſelves and their own.

7. Our refuſing then communion with you, ugh whether in reality or pretence you have de ſuch large and loving condeſcentions, (as call them) ſince you ſtill want that loving ndeſcention to *Chriſt*, in obeying the Voice that great Prophet, doth not make us guil- of Schiſm; much leſs Schiſm greatly ag- vated.

Quæſt.

Quest. 16.

Whether there are not many among you that do all they can to obstruct our reconciliation, and u dermine all our Endeavours after Unity; cry down and condemning all but themselves, lest they should most of all condemn themselves, for making unnecessary divisions in the Church of God? Like the Painter in Plutarch, that had unskilfully pain ted a Cock, afterwards chased away all Cocks and Hens, lest the imperfection of his Art should be discovered. And whether some among you in this manner, having made this unskilful Separation (to say no worse), have not cast away all thoughts of tenders of accommodation, and them that tender it, lest their foul deformity of Church-breaking should be detected?

Answer.

1. We will and can (without being asham'd thereof) freely acknowledge, That there are many we hope among us, that do the best they can to obstruct such a Reconciliation as you would have, and to undermine (as you call it, though we have, and will play above board, and deal plainly) all your endeavours for Unity, upon your terms of Unity: Which would rather tend to a going back, than a going on to perfection; and would be rather a combination against the God of Order and Truth, than a right well-approved Reconciliation and Unity which he will say Amen to.

2. A

2. And in so doing we cry up truth, and not our selves otherwise then servants to it, and lovers of it, knowing withal we are but unprofitable servants, for when we have done all, we have done no more than what is our duty to do; nor do we cry down you, nor any, but as the Word of the Lord doth, for your disobedience to Christ; we must not say light is darkness, and darkness is light; wo be to us if we should.

3. Neither do we obstruct your endeavours after Reconciliation and Unity, from any self-condemnation, of making Divisions in the Church, knowing the guilt of Church-dividing, is not upon us; the Word of the Lord, and our own Consciences not condemning us (but justifying us) though you unjustly do, that you might cover your selves under the mantle of mens approbation; which covering would be too narrow, had you by your late endeavours obtained your end, for your only way will be to lay your Church-Foundation right, submit to that you have long quarrelled about, have respect to all the commands of the Lord Jesus, so will you approve your selves to God, and be united to his People.

4. And as for your levity and flash about the Painter and his Cock; we never drove you away, as being ashamed of any thing we have done in separating from you, but were alwayes

willing to meet the best of you in any place, in publick Conference, or otherwise, by all wayes and means we lawfully might use, that our practice may be seen and tryed by the Word; and never upon that account chased away your Cock, nor no other, but have given yours battel again and again; nor do we fear to let ours be seen, being drawn not by the unskilful Painter in *Plutarch*, but by the Lord Jesus in the *Gospel*; and therefore if we chase you away from us in point of Communion, it is lest the deformity of your Fabrick, having but a piece or part Foundation, should bring us in time to the same deformity, and disorder with you.

Quest. 17.

Whether to break Communion with, or separate from the Communion of a Church of Christ for some single Errour not essential to a Church state, be not a wounding to the weak, and a hardening to the wicked? Whether it doth not keep many out of the Church that would come in, and give occasion of going out to many that are in? Whether Divisions from a true Church, are not an in-let to Atheism and Infidelity? and whether all Christians ought not to eschew Divisions, as great reproaches to Christian Religion?

Answer.

1. A known Error is not to be suffered nor tollerated in the Church of God; for by the same

same rule, one may, more may, till the Church be fuller of stinking weeds, than choice flowers; and what will the weeds do, but eat out the living and thriving virtue of the flowers; we would not be so much the Devils friend, as to give him leave to plant, much less to suffer any thing of his planting to grow in the Lord's garden: Errour is of the Father of Lyes.

2. Errour in the Church, though held but by some; if suffered, threatens the ruine of the whole body. *Thou hast there, that hold the Doctrine of* Balaam, *&c. Repent, or else I will come quickly, &c.* Errour suffered in some Members, may defile the body, and make it culpable of the sin of Errour and Heresie; *A little Leaven leaveneth the whole lump.* What will make the Church of God such a sinful confused, unclean heap, as the Church of *Rome* is, sooner than such a toleration.

3. Yet such Errours, as not eating meats, though *every creature of God be good, if it be received with thanks-giving*, and such-like, being in Error nor essential to Church-communion; to break Communion with a Church of Christ for some such single Error, may be a wounding to the weak, and a hardening to the wicked; and may keep many out of the Church that would come in, and give occasion of going out to many they are in; and such Divisions from true Church, may be an in-let to Atheism

and Infidelity, and ought to be eschewed by all Christians, as great reproaches to Christian Religion, and all this, Errors in Fundamentals, *&c.* will do.

The end of the *Questions* grounded upon the first *Hypothesis*; the second follows with their *Answers.*

Quest. 18.

But if it shall be said (as some of you have Preached and Printed) that laying on of Hands is essential to Church-communion, and that those that are not under it, have not God, and are not in Communion with God; it is demanded, where are the Scriptures that either prove it essential to Communion, and that those that are not under it, have not Communion with God?

Answer.

1. We have not only said, but still do say, that laying on of Hands is essential to Church-communion, and that those who transgress against Christs Doctrine (of which Doctrine laying on of Hands is a Principle, as hath been confessed by you to be, in these words, *viz. One of the first Rudiments of Christianity*) hath not Communion with God as his Church hath, especially you, who have made such wicked and absurd opposition against it, as you have done. See our Answer to the 12th *Question.*

2. Whereas you demand where the Scriptures are, that prove laying on of Hands to be essential

essential to communion: we say they are in *Heb.* 6. *Acts* 8. 19. But if you mean where are the Scriptures that *in terminis* will say so; we demand, where are the Scriptures that in so many words will prove Baptism of Water, the Resurrection of the Dead, eternal Judgment, to be essential to Communion, every one of which you make an essential thereof, if you deceive us not; and if they, why not laying on of Hands, which is as truly as either of them a Foundation Principle of Christs Doctrine.

3. And since you demand where are the Scriptures that prove those that are not under laying on of Hands, have not Communion with God; we tell you once again, that the Scriptures proving such transgressors as you have been, who have both blaspheme and prophaned that sacred Appointment of the Lords, which is a Foundation Principle of his Doctrine, have not Communion with God as his Church, are in 2 *Joh.* 9. *Joh.* 14. 24. *Acts* 3. 22, 23. with many more in the *New Testament.*

Quest. 19.

If it shall be said, as some of you have Printed and said, That they that are not under laying on of Hands, have not God, because they transgress, and not abide in the Doctrine of Christ, according to 2 Joh. 9. *We demand whether this be not vain Philosophy; and whether by the same reason, we may not unchurch all the Churches that ever were*

in the world? Might it not be said of the Church of the Hebrews, that they had not God, because they had not an acquaintance with, and so consequently did not abide in all the Doctrine of Christ, relating to his Priestly Office; and whether those many things that the Author had to say concerning Christs high Priesthood, where the Doctrine of Christ, and Christs Oracles, or the Authors own inventions? if they were Christs Oracles or sayings which they could not receive because they were dull of hearing, then they did transgress them; or why doth the Author find fault with them? And if they did transgress his sayings and Oracles, and yet were a Church, and still in communion, and are call'd Babes in Christ, how dare you say, they that abide not in all Christs sayings, have not God? Did not the Churches in Asia transgress? and might it not be said of them that they did not abide in all Christs Doctrine, when Ephesus left her first love, when Pergamos retained those in communion that held the Doctrine of Balaam, and the Nicholaitans; and the Church of Sardis kept their communion with those that had defiled their garments, and the Laodiceans are charged with luke-warmness, and with being self-conceited, and so are the Church of Corinth, in suffering the incestuous person; for which they ought by Christs Doctrine to have been humbled; we demand where the Scriptures do declare these to be no Churches or incommunicable, though in many things they did transgress

greſs the ſayings (and did not continue or abide in all the Doctrines and Oracles) of God? but if for all theſe they were ſtill owned as Churches, how then dare you ſay of them, or of any that ſhould fail like them, that they are no Churches, and have not communion with God, becauſe they abide not in all his Doctrine?

May not we rather turn the edge of that Argument upon your ſelves? thus:

They that God owns for Churches, you ſin in diſowning; but God owns thoſe for Churches, that fail and come ſhort of many things, that Chriſt taught them; therefore you ſin in diſowning them.

Anſwer.

1. We ſay again, as ſome of us have Printed and ſaid, That you who have tranſgreſſed at ſuch a rate as you have done, and ſtill do againſt the Doctrine of Chriſt, have not God as his Church, according to 2 *Joh.* 9. nor is this vain Philoſophy (as you vainly enquire) but ſound words and wholſome Doctrine, which ſome of you will find to your ſorrow in the day of account, if you repent not.

2. Nor can any Church rightly conſtituted be unchurched by this reaſon, Becauſe Churches rightly conſtituted do not tranſgreſs againſt the Doctrine of Chriſt, but continue in it, and have both the Father and the Son; nor can it be ſaid of the *Hebrew* Church, that they had not

God, because they understood not all those things hard to be uttered, relating to the Priestly Office of Christ; because they had laid all the Principles of Christs Doctrine, *Heb.* 5. 12. and 6. 1, 2. which you have not, and continued in them, *Act.* 2. 42. which you do not. Their fault for which the Apostle blames them, was, their slack and slow growth for the time they had been a Church, built upon the Rock Christ, and the Foundation-Principles of his Doctrine; by which neglect, they became dull of hearing, and were yet but as Babes unskilful in the Word of Righteousness, and therefore he exhorts them to go on to perfection, *Heb.* 6, 1. that they might redeem their lost time, and avoid the danger they stood in of falling away from what they were partakers of; their danger being such, that if they should still continue slothful and negligent, and not go on to perfection, they would at length fall from, and not continue in the Doctrine of Christ on which they were built, which if they did, there was no renewing them by repentance.

3. And indeed those things of which they were ignorant, were those parts of the Doctrine of Christ that belong'd to perfection, and their further growing up in him; but not the Foundation or beginning part of Christians. Nor though they were dull of hearing, and could not receive those things hard to be uttered, relating

lating to the Priestly Office of Christ; yet were they not Denyers, Opposers, and Disputers against it, as you have been against laying on of hands, more than twenty years.

4. The Churches in *Asia* were true constituted Churches, and yet they transgressed and did not abide in all Christs Doctrine, for which cause (though the Spirit commends them in some things) they would not have God long as his Church, except they repented of those Transgressions; *I will remove thy Candlestick out of its place, except thou repent*, Rev. 2. 5. By which it may plainly be perceived that their not abiding in the Doctrine of Christ, would unchurch them that were true constituted Churches, without Repentance, and doing their first works; though we will not say that they were *ipso facto* declared no Churches of Christ, and such as have no communion with God as his Church: Though we dare say that you, whose Church-constitution was never right, have not God as his Church; and we dare say, That the Churches in *Asia*, and the Church of *Corinth* for suffering the incestuous person, and for saying, (some of them) *the Resurrection was past, &c.* after all lawful endeavours made, and means used to purge them from those evils, had they not repented, but still persisted in their Sin and Impenitency, they would soon find they should cease to be a Church in God, and incommunicable

for

for their not abiding in the Doctrine of Chri
and Oracles of God. And thus much we ca
say of them, or of any that fail like them, Th
then (as afore) they are no Churches, have n
communion with God as his Church, becau
they abide not in all his Doctrine.

5. Your Argument then is not of such for
to turn the edge of ours upon us, as you thin
for we answer it by distinction thus: If in yo
minor Proposition, by failing and coming sho
of many things Christ taught them, you me
fundamental things, we deny your minor.
if you mean a failing and coming short of ma
things Christ taught, as in the Churches of
sus, and the Church of *Corinth*, joyned with i
penitency, all lawful means being used to pu
them, we then likewise deny your minor.
if you do not mean Fundamentals, nor sins jo
ed with Impenitency, as is aforesaid; then
say, God owns such for Churches, and
should sin if we did not; though they fail
come short of perfection in many things.
then it follows not that God owns, or that
ought to own such for Churches, that fail
come short in Fundamentals, or the first Ru
ments of Christianity, as you do.

Quest. 20.

Whether it be not an abuse of that Text, 2 Jo
to infer from the Doctrine of Christ there men
ed, That there can be no Churches nor Chu

Ma

bers, where every thing that Christ taught, is observed and continued in: When by Doctrine, here, a man of a short sight may perceive is meant confessing that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, appears vers. 7. which whosoever abideth not in, shall deny, hath not God; and if this be not the sense, but the other (viz.) *That he that continues in all Christs sayings, hath not God, and is no member of Christ; then either your selves are no Church, or else you are all perfect, and guilty of no sin, because all sin is a transgressing Christs Doctrine, and he that saith he hath no sin, is a Lyar, and the truth is not in him,* 1 John 1. 10.

Answer.

1. Who did you ever know infer from Heb. 9. That there can be no Churches, nor Church-members, where every thing Christ taught is not observed and continued in. 'Tis true, we say that every Principle of the Doctrine of Christ which he taught as the first Rudiments of Christianity, must be observed and continued in, or else there can be no Church or Church-Members rightly constituted. And if observed, believed, and practised, and not continued in, they that now are a Church right in constitution, may (as afore is said) cease to be a Church for their transgressing, and not abiding in the Doctrine of Christ, 2 *John* 9.

2. But you say, *By Doctrine in that place, is meant* (as a man of a short sight may perceive) *the confessing*

confessing that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, appears, vers. 7. Suppose this should be meaning, we demand whether every one verbally so confesseth, and doth not verbally ny Christ to be come in the Flesh, doth ans the mind of the Spirit in that Text, and h both the Father and the Son, so long as he deth by such a Confession, we think you not so say; for if you should, then must own *Rome* to be a Church of Christ: Bec they stoutly confess with their mouths, and bide by it that Christ is come in the flesh, y and will burn them that shall deny it; now this be the meaning of the Text, then hath *R* both the Father and the Son, and doth not tra gress, but continue in the Doctrine of Chri and thousands more besides, who will thus co fess Christ to be come in the flesh, but know not that in works they deny him? If then man short-sighted may see that by Doctrine, meant a confessing of Christ to be come in t flesh, that confession must be more than verb as a man very short-sighted may perceive; a that by confessing Christ, is to own him to be Prince and a Saviour, to believe, obey, and do what he hath taught, and to continue in Doctrine. So then, though it may be as y say, yet is it not to be thought, that onely single and alone confessing of Christ to be co in the flesh, is there meant by Doctrine:

bei

ing so comprehensive a word, that it contains it no less (if not more) than the foundation-rt, mentioned *Heb.*6. And therefore they that nsgress, and abide not in that fundamental rt, *viz.* Repentance, Faith, the Doctrine of ptisms, Laying on of Hands, the Resurrecti-from the Dead, and eternal Judgment, have t God as his Church; but he that continues the Doctrine of Christ, hath both the Fa-r and the Son.

Then is it no abuse of the Text, to say as the ext saith: But you rather abuse us, to say that e infer that there can be no Churches nor hurch-Members, that continue not in every ing that Christ taught; and that they have ot God, nor are no Members of Christ. But e say, They cannot be Churches rightly consti-ted, that abide not in Christs Doctrine, for ey have not God, and so saith the Text. And et there may be Churches truly stated, that e not perfect, and that will not say, they have o sin: *For in many things we offend all,* James 2.

Quest. 21.

If you shall say, That by denying Communion to those that abide not in the Doctrine of Christ, you mean such as abide not in Fundamentals; not that you could have Communion with those that err and differ from you in the Circumstantials of Religion, as some of you have said, and others have printed:

printed: Then we demand, what those Circumstantial Errors are? And whether they are not transgressions of the Word, Doctrine, Sayings, Commands, or Oracles of Christ? If they be transgressions of the Sayings and Oracles of Christ, &c. then we demand whether that argument is not ridiculous that saith, They have no communion with God, that abide not in all the Sayings and Doctrines of Christ, &c? And then what becomes of your great cry you make against us, for not continuing in all the Doctrines and Sayings of Christ; and that whoever doth not continue in all, hath no communion with God? when your selves allow there may be communion where Errors are circumstantial, and thereby tacitly acknowledge what other whiles you oppose (viz.) That they that abide in all Christs Doctrine may notwithstanding have communion with God.

Answer.

1. We have already told you, That no known Error ought to be suffered in the Church; nor do we say we can have communion with those that maintain any thing contrary, or in opposition to the Doctrine of Christ: Yet as you say we can have communion with those that differ from us in Circumstantials; but to give our selves or others an allowance to err in Fundamentals, would be a crime as bad, as an allowance in any fleshly and actual sin.

2. You then demand what those Circumstantials are, and whether they be not transgressions

ssions of the Word, Sayings, Doctrine, Com-
nds, or Oracles of Christ; we say no, they
not transgressions against Christs Doctrine,
. but such things as may be done, or left
done, and no sin committed against God.
t say you, what are those Errors? It is an
nor to refuse and deny the eating of meats,
cause *every creature of God is good, and nothing*
e refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:
t if my Brother be weak, and will eat herbs,
d will be offended if I eat flesh, we will not
eak communion with him because he will eat
flesh, nor eat flesh our selves, lest we cause
r weak Brother to stumble and be offended;
is to err in circumstantials, and all other
ngs of the like kind, that may, or may not
done, and no Law of Christ broken; for
nsgressions of the Word and Doctrine of
rist, must not be tollerated in the Church of
rist, he must be heard in all things; and if
that Argument is not ridiculous, but re-
ins firm and untouched, that saith, They
e not God as his Church, who transgress
d abide not in the Doctrine of Christ.

3. And then that great cry (as you call it) make against you, for your disobedience to rist, is still remaining where it was; our ices will be lifted up as high as ever, until do from the heart obey that form of Do-ine which was delivered to the Primitive Saints,

Saints, *Rom.*6.17. nor do we allow Commun
on where Errors are (except you mean such
is above expressed) longer than the erroni
can be orderly dealt with; therefore we do n
tacitly acknowledge (as you imagine) wh
other-while we oppose.

Quest. 22.

*But if you shall say, you intend by Christs D
strine those six Principles contained,* Heb.6. a
*that whoever agrees with you in them, doth ag
in fundamentals, and with such you can commu
cate: then we demand why some of you refuse co
munion about an Oath, others about mixt Ma
riages, others about washing of Feet; others
you refuse communion with such as are under lay
on of Hands, if they do hold communion with th
that are not under laying on of Hands: others r
fuse communion in matters of Apparel; other
bout Blood and things strangled? What reason h
you for these divisions, unless you will say, all th
are Fundamentals; and if they be, then what
your circumstantials you talk of? and whether
have not adopted more Fundamentals than ever
found in the 6th of the* Hebrews? *And whet
you may not by the same reason, if that Notion
Christs not taking flesh of the Virgin, get but F
selytes enough; adopt that also into the number
Fundamentals, as well as the rest? and so at
leave us no circumstantials to differ about; for
can well remember, when laying on of Hands*

eſteemed a Fundamental Doctrine, but the
aſers of it, for ſome time, kept their commu-
with us, till it had made a Party, and then
was advanced to the dignity of Fundamental,
afterwards we were eſteemed too mean to keep
pany with thoſe that ſo eſteemed it; and have
all the fore-mentioned Opinions, bid fair for the
advancement? and will they not be ſo eſteem-
when they which are the Abettors of them
k they have numbers and opportunities for that
poſe?

And may they not by the ſame arguments which
uſe to ſeparate from us, ſeparate from you, when
believe any thing to be a Doctrine of Chriſt
ich you do not?

And do you not by this means furniſh men with
ons to divide Churches into Atoms, till they
made God's ſpiritual Houſe like his literal
ſe, that ſhall not have one Stone left upon ano-
, which will not be thrown down? Will they
gue thus: They which abide not in the Do-
ne of Chriſt, have not God; but ſuch as are not
waſhing of feet, ſaluting with a holy kiſs, and
h as are for taking an Oath, though to end ſtrife,
for eating of Blood, and things ſtrangled, and
h as being under laying on of hands, yet commu-
te with them that are not under it; together
h ſuch as do not eat a Supper before breaking of
ad, and ſuch as marry out of the Church, and
h as believe Chriſt took fleſh of the Virgin Mary;

all these do not abide in the Doctrine of Christ, and therefore they have not God? Where will not this kind of reasoning run you at last?

Answer.

1. You know we say and do intend by Christ's Doctrine, those six Principles mentioned *Heb.* 6. and that whoever agrees with us in Fundamentals, we can have Communion with, provided their Conversation be according to the Gospel.

2. We refuse communion with those that take some Oaths, because Christ doth forbid such swearing, *Mat.* 5.34. *Jam.* 5.12. and because such as take them, abjure their obedience to Christ, and swear obedience to the Doctrines and Commandments of men.

3. We refuse communion about mixt Marriages, because they are forbid both in the Old and New Testament: The Church of *Pergamus* must not have them among them that hold such Doctrine.

4. We know of none that refuse communion about washing of Feet.

5. We refuse communion with those that use under laying on of hands, if they have communion with those that are not under laying on of hands; because it is disorder and confusion, and also a transgression against the Doctrine of Christ.

6. We do not refuse communion in mat-

of Apparel, otherwise than is said in the Answer to the fourth Question.

7. There is sufficient ground to deal with such Members as will eat Blood, and things strangled, to the trouble and offence of their fellow-Brethren, *Act.* 15. 29. & 21. 25. for we would have you to know that Members of Churches may hold that in their Judgments and Practice, and that in their Lives, though they are under all the first Principles of the Oracles of God, that may deserve the censure of the Church, and yet the Church not adopt them first Rudiments of Christianity; for we have no Fundaments adopted by us, nor do we own more than those *Heb.* 6. for all this taunting Talk of yours; And yet we shall say, That there is good reason why we should differ with those that deny the Doctrine of the Trinity, and that Christ is the second Person in it, God of one substance with the Father; yea, and to refuse communion with them that say he is a created being, and was not, nor had no being, before he was conceived in the Womb of the Virgin *Mary*; and indeed this wicked and absurd opinion did get Proselytes, and found opportunity to make a Schism in the Body of Christ.

8. Your memory fails you, as well as you say you can remember; for we can better know and remember that before we came under laying on of hands, we did esteem it a Foundation-

rinciple, and submitted to it, as to one; but did indeed keep and continue with you for some time, preaching, disputing, and perswading you to obey the Lord Jesus, (but other communion we had none) until many of you were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of this way before the multitude; then we departed, and separated the Disciples.

9. There is none, by our Arguments we have to separate from you, can separate from us; because we still continue, through the grace of God, in the Doctrine of Christ; nor say things are of the Doctrine of Christ, that are not. Nor do we, by what means we take to defend that Truth which you oppose, put Weapons into the hands of any to divide Churches; but the means you take to resist the Truth, will furnish those that list to make use of them with Weapons to fill the Church with Error and Sin, till it becomes as filthy as *Rome* it self.

10. Therefore though you would argue us falsly into great inconveniencies, we may turn it upon your selves from what you maintain and argue thus: If communion may be held with them that disown the practice of laying on of hands, then with them that disown another Principle of the Doctrine of Christ, and so a third, and them that adore two Gods, the true God and a dumb Idol; sinful Marriages; that Christ is a meer created man, and onely a God made

made, as *Moses* and *David* was; and sinful swearing: Then may we not break communion, though all *Rome's* trash and filth should be brought in. And where will this kind of reasoning run you at last?

Here ends their Questions grounded upon their second *Hypothesis*: The third follows, with our Answers to them.

Quest. 23.

But if you shall say, Laying on of hands is required by the Scripture, Heb. 6. *to be a Doctrine of Christ, and a Foundation-Doctrine, and therefore though some Opinions may be called Foundation-Doctrines, without warrant; yet that doth not hinder, but you may call a Doctrine so, when you have warrant, as you have for this; and therefore if we differ from you in denying a Fundamental Doctrine, you can have no communion with us:*

We demand, How you can infallibly infer your Practice from this Text, Heb. 6. *if you do but consider first, That there are many learned men of the Church of* England, *who though they practise laying on of hands upon all their Members, as you do: as you, so they use their endeavours to prove their Practice from hence; yet Dr.* Hamond, *as learned and Judicious as most of that Way, and as well read in the Customs of the Primitive Times, tells us in his Annotations upon that place, That the*

laying on of hands there spoken of, is understood for a laying on of hands upon such as had fallen after Baptism, which was done to signifie their Restoration to the Church. And thus he further proves from Paul's advice to Timothy, 1 Tim. 5. 22. where he is not speaking of any other thing, but Church-Censures; as how that an Elder should not be accused, but by two or three Witnesses, vers. 19. that those that sin should be rebuked before all, vers. 20. and that he should not in judging Offenders, do any thing by partiality, vers. 21. neither lay hands too suddenly upon any that had been censured by the Church, and had not truly repented of their sins; lest he thereby became partaker of their sins, &c.

We from hence demand, Which of all these laying on of hands is intended Heb. 6. and is that which you call a Doctrine of Christ? And whether (if the laying on of hands spoken of Heb. 6. a Doctrine of Christ) it is not more safe to understand it for that Doctrine which Christ preached and practised, and his Apostles afterwards practised in healing the Sick, than for those other laying on of hands, which Christ never taught nor practised, and which the Apostles never practised in conformity to a Command, but by way of Accommodation to laudable Customs of the Jews, as they did in divers other Cases; and if they did practise that kind of laying on of hands, Act. 8. & 19. in obedience to a Command, shew those Commands, and also

your practice of laying on of hands on all you baptize, both Men and Women, who have no such Blessing to communicate as they had, doth agree with their practice, and we shall be satisfied.

And since we read of divers laying on of hands, and divers men are differently perswaded concerning that in Heb.6. yea, and such men whose interest leads them to think of it as you do; and yet they cannot reasonably so understand it; we demand, whether this is not a sufficient ground for us to doubt whether the laying on of hands practised by you, be instituted by God? Whether it can reasonably and infallibly be inferred from this Text? And if not, whether it be not great presumption for you to judge all incommunicable, that come not up to you in a matter that is so dubitable.

Answer.

1. Never put an *if* to it, for we do say, laying on of hands, mentioned *Heb.6.* is one Principle of the first Oracles of God, and of the Doctrine of Christ, one of the first Rudiments of Christianity, *&c.* You then demand, How from this Text, *Heb.6.* we can infallibly infer the practice? Considering Dr. *Hamond*, as learned and Judicious as any in the Church of *England*, and as well read in the Customs of the Primitive Times, tells us in his Annotations on that place *That the laying on of hands there spoken of, is understood for a laying on of hands upon such as had fallen after Baptism.*

2. It's notably done, and well thought on, seeing help fails you from the Scriptures, to se whether the learned judicious and well-rea Doctors in Mystery *Babylon*, can lend you any But pray doth not this learned, judicious, an well-read Doctor, tell you no where, in no plac of his Annotations, *That the baptising of Infan was a primitive Practice, or that it came in ne those Times by good, authentick, Orthodox Auth rity?* If he doth, pray do you consider how yo can infallibly infer from *Mat.*28.19. the Bap tism of Believers, as you practise it, since learned a judicious and well-read Doctor was his Judgement and Practice for sprinkling Babes; and no doubt but he (so learned an wise) hath something to say for his Pra ctice.

3. *But this* (say you) *he further proves fr Paul's advice to Timothy*, 1 Tim.5.2. *where h not speaking of any other thing but Church-Ce sures.* Look again the whole Chapter thorou that a Church-Censure? v. 18,19. if not, th that, v.22. may not be a laying on of hands s denly upon any that had been censured by t Church? And this will appear more plain, comparing the third Chapter with this; t may it be as fairly and as wisely conclud That this laying on of hands which *Timothy* m not be sudden in, was for Ordination of *Bi* and *Deacons*, rather than a laying on of ha

up

upon such as had fallen after Baptism: for where read you of such a laying on of hands in all the Scripture, either taught or practised by any; the deep silence thereof, makes us we can neither credit the Doctor nor you in this matter, though he be learned, judicious, and well read in the Primitive Customs. But if what he saith were true, yet will it do you no service; because if such a laying on of hands were then practised, neither you nor Dr. *Hammond* to help you, (nay, take *Victor*, and the third Council of *Carthage* with you also) can prove such a laying on of hands to be that mentioned *Heb.*6. which is there said to be a Principle of the Doctrine of Christ, a Foundation-Principle. But no more in this place to such a Scriptureless-notion.

4. To your second consideration, we shall say no more yet, than what we have already said in answer to your former printed Questions, where this is stated, and by us answered. See *Gods Oracle and Christs Doctrine*, p. 39, 40. But we grant,

You do read of a laying on of hands on the Sick, but how delivered in the Commission, we shall hereafter examine: And you do read of laying on of hands to ordain Officers, and of laying on of hands by which men received the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit: But why do you not make up just half a dozen, but leave out that

that now, you brought in with the rest in your printed Questions before; mentioned *Luk.* 2. 12. *But the fifth* (you say) *is that laying on of hands which was afterwards call'd Confirmation because by the Gifts of the holy Ghost, the Christians were confirmed in the truth of the Gospel: and though those Gifts ceased, yet they continued the practice of it in the Church of Rome, and many other Protestant Churches to this day.*

5. Here you confess that the laying on of hands mentioned in *Act.* 18. 17. & 19. 6. is practised by the Church of *Rome*, and many Protestant Churches, down from the primitive times to this day. May we not think it strange, if it be so, that you should oppose and refuse to practise that which so many learned, judicious and well-read Doctors as have been all along in the Church of *Rome*, and many Protestant Churches, do practise; but rather against many, take the private opinion of some few, who by their opinion (if true) do not contradict nor oppose that laying on of hands mentioned by you in the fifth of your numerations; considering withall, that the Doctors in *Rome*, and in many Protestant Churches, do not consent to such a practice as laying on of hands, when they receive any that are fallen after Baptism, at this day.

6. In your next, you seem to thrust in by head and shoulders, another sort of laying on

of

hands; or if not, another ground the Apostles and primitive Churches had to practise the latter you numerate, than the Authority of Christs Doctrine, when you say, *It was practised by them, by way of accommodation to the Jewish Customs; as* (you say) *appears in Moses laying his hands upon Joshua,* Numb. 18. 19, 22, 23. Deut. 34. 9. *and so Jacob blessed the Children of Joseph, by laying his hands upon them.* Doth it appear from those places and passages you quote, that the Apostles and primitive Churches did practise laying on of hands by way of Accommodation to the Jewish Customs? We think when you consider better what you say, you will not be of that mind: For, may it not as well be concluded, That the Apostles practised the Baptism of Water by way of Accommodation to the Jewish Customs, as appears, because the Jews among their Customs had divers washings, *Heb.* 9. 10. And is not this as good a proof of the one, as yours is of the other?

7. And what though the people brought their Children to Christ for him to bless, *Mat.* 19. 13. in observation of a Jewish Custom, and the Ruler of the Synagogue did the like? *Mark* 5. 23. And what if it should be granted that Christ did lay his hands on them to confer Blessings on the one, and to heal the other, by way of Accommodation to the Jewish Customs? Will it follow

low therefore that his Apostles after his passio
when he had blotted out the hand-writing
Ordinances, nailing them to his Cross, *Col.*
14. *Ephes.* 2. 15. and after his Resurrection
when he had given them their Commission
Mat. 28. 19, 20. yea, and after he was asce
ded, and had sent them, according to his Pr
mise, the Spirit of Truth, which should guid
them into all Truth, should practise laying o
of hands by way of Accommodation to the Je
ish Customs, and call it a Principle of Chris
Doctrine, *Heb.* 6. 1. Surely no man in his righ
mind, will so conclude. But leaving this too
as a Scriptureless-notion, we will proceed.

8. You then demand, *Which of all those la
ings on of hands is intended* Heb. 6. *and is tha
which we call a Doctrine of Christ?*

You have been told long since, which lay
ing on of hands is intended *Heb.* 6. that i
is that practised by the Apostles, *Act.* 8. 17.
& 19. 6. for which let the Reader consult *Gods
Oracle, and Christs Doctrine*, from page 41. to
page 54. where this Question is stated by you,
and answered, yea, and clearly proved to be
that laying on of hands on baptised Believers a
such, and no other.

9. But then you enquire, *Whether it be no
more safe to understand it for that Doctrine which
Christ preached and practised, and his Apostles af
terwards practised in healing the Sick, than that*

Christ

ist never taught nor practised, nor his Apostles
ther, in conformity to a Command, but by way of
commodation to the laudable Customs of the
s, as they did in divers other Cases.

We confess, it is more safe, of the two, to
derstand it to be for healing the Sick, than
which Christ never taught nor practis'd,
his Apostles neither, in conformity to a
mmand, if any such laying on of hands
re is; which if there be, we know of none,
ept it be that laying on of hands mentioned
.8.11,12. which not they, but the wicked
ised.

But 'tis observable how rarely well you beg
Question, when you conclude that the Apo-
s did in divers cases practise laying on of
nds by way of Accommodation to the lauda-
Custom of the Jews: Pray where is that
itten? There is not the least syllable in the
ipture that intimates such a thing, much less
t affirms it.

10. And whereas you require us, *if they did*
ctise that laying on of hands, Act.8.17. & 19.
obedience to a Command, to shew it. We say it
h been already shewed. Let the *Reader*
ruse *Gods Oracle and Christs Doctrine*, from
ge 79. to page 84. And as for our practice
laying on of hands on all we baptise, both
Men and Women, that hath been shewed and
roved also: Let the Reader see *Gods Oracle*

and

and Christs Doctrine, page 47,48,49. Read a
weigh well what is there said, without partia
ty, laying aside all prejudicate Opinions
byassed Resolutions, and he will be satisfied
both.

11. But you further say, *Since divers wen*
differently perswaded concerning that in Heb.6.
and such men whose interest leads them to think
it as we do, and yet they cannot reasonably so und
stand it; you demand whether this is not a suffi
ent ground for you to doubt whether the la
on of hands practised by us, be instituted
God?

Truly we think it so far from being a suffi
ent ground for you to doubt, because Dr. H
mond, or any other learned judicious Doc
doth, that we think it is not any ground at
for you to doubt also: We have abler (a
more approved) Doctors for our practice, th
Dr. *Hamond*, or *Victor*, or *Carthage*'s Council
And therefore we say it can be both reasona
and infallibly inferred, and more than an in
rence it is from *Heb.6.* comparing this
with some other, that the laying on of hands
practise, is instituted by the Lord, as a Foun
tion-Principle of Christs Doctrine; and is
presumption to judge you incommunica
that come not up to us in a matter not dubi
ble, but clear and plain.

Quest.

Queſt. 24.

And whereas you ſay thoſe Doctrines are call'd beginning Doctrines, Heb. 6. *and therefore laying on of hands muſt be ſo call'd:*

We demand, Why the Wonders which the Apoſtles did, & the Cures they wrought by laying on of hands upon ſuch as they healed, being that which Chriſt taught, and himſelf and Apoſtles practiſed, might rather be eſteemed a beginning of the Doctrine of Chriſt, than that which you practiſe, for which you have at beſt but a doubtful example? And though this of healing was practicable upon none but the Sick, yet was it teaching to all, to ſee and know the Sick were raiſed and cured; as appears Luk. 13.17. Act. 28.8,9. *and ſo it was a practice that was introductive to the beginnings of Chriſtianity in theſe times.*

Anſwer.

1. You demand, Why the Wonders which the Apoſtles did, and the Cures they wrought, by laying on of hands upon ſuch as they healed, being that which Chriſt taught, and himſelf and the Apoſtles practiſed, might not rather be eſteemed a beginning of the Doctrine of Chriſt, than that which we practiſe?

The laying on of hands to heal the Sick, was not preceptively taught by Chriſt, but promiſcuouſly, in the way of a Promiſe annexed and made to them that did believe; *Theſe ſigns ſhall follow them that believe,* Mark 16. 17. *They ſhall*

lay

lay hands on the Sick, and they shall recover, ver. 18. By which signes the preceptive part of Christs Word and Doctrine was confirmed to be from Heaven, and not of Men; *And they went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them, confirming the Word with signs following, Amen*, vers. 20. Then laying on of hands to heal the Sick, not being preceptively taught by Christ, by way of command, but promissively, by way of Promise, it cannot be esteemed that laying on of hands, which is a Principle of the Doctrine of Christ, *Heb.* 6. now under debate, but that by which that Principle of Christs beginning Word or Doctrine, was (among the rest of them) confirmed to be from Heaven, and not of men.

2. Again, If laying on of hands to heal the Sick, was preceptively taught, by way of Command, and so ought to be esteemed that part of the beginning Doctrine of Christ, *Heb.* 6. Then is casting out *Devils*, speaking with new *Tongues*, taking up *Serpents*, drinking any deadly *thing* and not be hurt, taught also by way of Command; and then every one of them is as well the beginning Doctrine of Christ, *Heb.* and your duty to do, as to be baptised: And why then should not casting out *Devils*, and every one of the rest be esteemed a Principle of Christs Doctrine, and the first Rudiments of Christianity? We have then better Reason to

y you have to the contrary to esteem laying of hands on baptised Believers as such, practised by the Apostles, *Act.*8.17. *Act.*19.6. to one Principle of the beginning Doctrine of Christ, rather than that to heal the Sick, because it was promissively and not preceptively taught by Christ.

3. But you say, *Rather to heal the Sick, than that we practise, for which we have but a doubtful example at the best.*

How can you be so clouded, as to say, We have for laying on of hands but a doubtful Example at the best? What practice can have more clear and apparant example than we have for this? See *Act* 8.17. & 19.6. Moreover it's one of the first Principles of the Oracles of God, *Heb.*5.12. One of the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, a Foundation-principle, *Heb.*6.2. Authority enough to all that have reason, and will use it, whose minds are not darkened.

4. And as you say, so we say, *This laying on of hands to heal the Sick, was practicable to none but the Sick:* But how then could it be one of the first Rudiments of Christianity, when no Christian Man or Woman could be built upon this Foundation, except he or she were first sick, and then you may esteem Sickness to be a foundation to this foundation, and so rather a beginning of the Doctrine of Christ. But you say, *It was teaching to all:* And we say, So it was practised

&tised on all; and therefore it cannot be the b ginning Doctrine of Christ, *Heb.* 6. beca they laid on hands to heal the Sick that were Church-Members, but of the world, *Luk.* 11,12,13. *Act.* 28.7,8,9. *The Lord working w them, confirming the Word with signs followin* according to *Mark* 16.20.

Quest. 25.

But whereas you say, Laying on of hands i Foundation-Doctrine, or a part of the Founda of Christianity, and therefore you cannot commu cate with such as do not own it; We demand wh the Text saith any such thing? And whet there can be any other Foundation laid, than th which is laid, which is Jesus Christ? 1 Cor. 11,12. —

And we demand, Whether this be not the w words and sence of the Text, when the Auth says, Heb. 6. *he* would not lay again the Fou dation OF Repentance, and the Foundation O Faith, and the Foundation OF the Doctrine Baptism, and the Foundation OF laying on hands, *&c.*

From all which we demand, Whether this pr ctice of yours, in laying on of hands upon all Bapt sed Disciples, (though it should be intended in He 6. which we despair of ever seeing the proof of) a Doctrine or Principle without which Gods Hou cannot be, or a Doctrine or Principle without whi it cannot so well and so compleatly be? If you say,

that without which Gods House cannot be; prove it, and we will believe you: But if you say, God may have a House, though less perfect, without it; then are not you all guilty of Schism in making a Separation from it?

Answer.

1. Your demand here is, *Where the Text saith that laying on of hands is a Foundation-Doctrine, or a part of the Foundation of Christianity?* Oh strange! Are you still ignorant of that, notwithstanding one of you confessed it to be one of the first Rudiments of Christianity, & so submitted to the practice of it? It is to be feared he did not lye to men but God, when he so confessed and practised; and yet secretly and mentally reserve, That it was no part of the Foundation of Christianity; as he here doth not only query, but plainly affirm. But we will gratifie you once more, and tell you, That Text *Heb.*6. 1,2. saith it, *Not laying again the Foundation of ——laying on of hands.*

2. Then you demand, *Whether there can be any other Foundation laid, than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ?* And go from querying to arguing; being put to this lamentable and desperate straight, that rather than you will acknowledge laying on of hands to be a foundation-Principle, you will deny Repentance, Faith, the Doctrine of Baptisms, the Resurrection of the Dead, and eternal Judgement, to be a foun-

dation, or any part of the foundation of Chri-
ſtianity: for it appears by your argumen-
that you hold that it is no part of the foundatio-
of Chriſtianity to repent and confeſs our ſin-
and to believe in Chriſt for the pardon of them
nor no part of the foundation of Chriſtianity t-
be baptiſed in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, an-
to practiſe Prayer, with laying on of hands, th-
we might receive the Spirit; to which end la-
ing on of hands was and is practiſed, that ev-
ry Member might be baptiſed by that one Spi-
into one Body; nor no part of the Foundatio-
of Chriſtianity to believe the Reſurrection
the Dead, and eternal Judgement. And pra-
ſeeing the Spirit in *Heb.* 6. 1, 2. ſaith they a-
Foundations, (for thus you and we read, *N-
laying again the foundation of Repentance from de-
works, and Faith towards God, the Doctrine of Ba-
tiſms, and of laying on of Hands, and of the R-
ſurrection of the Dead, and of eternal Judgemen-*
and they be (as you ſay) no part of the found-
tion of Chriſtianity, what are they the found-
tion of then? Judaiſm, or Paganiſm? For
foundation they are, and we believe of Chri-
ſtianity. But you thus reaſon:

*If there can be no other foundation than Je-
Chriſt, then is not Faith, nor Repentance, nor L-
ing on of hands, nor the believing the Reſurrec-
of the Dead, nor eternal Judgement, a founda-
or part of the foundation of Chriſtianity.*

here can be no other foundation laid than Jesus Christ. Ergo, Repentance, Faith, Baptism, and laying on of hands, the belief of the Resurrection of the Dead, and eternal Judgement, cannot be a foundation, or part of the foundation of Christianity.

We deny the consequence of your major Proposition: For all these that you say cannot be a foundation, nor no part of the Foundation of Christianity, the Spirit of God saith they are the Foundation, *Heb.* 6. 1. and the Spirit of God saith the *Ephesians* they were *built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner-stone*, Ephes. 2. 20. And were they not built on that foundation as Christians? If they were built thereon as Christians, which you cannot deny, then sure that foundation was part of the foundation of Christianity, which foundation is not another, but the same mentioned *Heb.* 6. 1.

3. Nor will your next Argument prove your major: For though Christ be the foundation of those Duties, as the Author, the great Doctor and Teacher of them, and the chief Corner-stone; yet doth it not follow, but that these Duties be the Principles of his Doctrine, and the Foundation of Christianity; being in plain terms said to be so by the Spirit of God, in the afore-cited places.

4. Neither doth this hinder but that Christ is the

Foundation, and that other foundation can no man lay, than Christ; which those do, who from the heart obey this form of Doctrine, *Rom.* 6. 17. for by Repentance we see our wretched and undone condition without Christ; by Faith we see our sins pardoned, our persons justified and accepted by Christ; by being baptised into his Name, we actually acknowledge his Death for our sins, and a washing of them away, and that he is risen, and we with him, to newness of life; by prayer and laying on of hands, we wait therein upon God, for the Spirit which he promised to send from the Father, *John* 15. 26. by which we are all baptised into his Body, and have the witness in our selves, that we are the Children of God; by the belief of the Resurrection of the Body, we wait in hope of the glory of God, and acknowledge that Christ is risen and is the Resurrection and the Life; and that we shall, though dead, be raised up to life by him at the last day; and by the belief of eternal Judgement, we look for his coming to judge both the Dead and the Living; and that we shall all appear before the Judgement-Seat of Christ, and there receive according to the things done in our Body, whether they be good or bad, with the Reward either of eternal Joy or everlasting shame and contempt. So that indeed, he that builds not upon these foundation Principles, lays not Christ the foundation, no
cu

can he be a Christian. So inseparable is Christ and these Principles of his Doctrine, that he cannot be laid the Foundation without these are laid, nor can these be laid the foundation without Christ; for had not Christ been a Prince and Saviour, able to save all that come unto God by him, there had been no foundation for these. And whoso shall refuse to submit to these, as the Principles of his Doctrine, Christ will be no Saviour to them. And this is the very sence of the Text, to which the whole body of Scripture agrees and consents: for the Apostle doth not deny Christ to be the Foundation, when he saith these Principles of his Doctrine are; nor doth he deny these are, when he saith Christ is, *1 Cor.* 3. 11, 12. as you absurdly argue. And who knows not, that knows any thing in Christianity, that he that falls away from one of these foundation-Principles, *viz.* the Resurrection of the Dead, falls from Christ, and denies him to be the foundation: *If Christ be not risen, your faith is vain, you are yet in your sins, 1 Cor.* 15. 17. Then those cannot be denied to be the foundation, but Christ must be denied also.

5. But then when you leave arguing, and query again, Whether this be not the sence of the Text, when the Author says, *Heb.* 6. *he would not lay again the foundation of Repentance, and the foundation of Faith, and the foundation of the Do-*

ſtrine of Baptiſms, and the foundation of Laying on of hands, &c. Here now you ſay the Author himſelf ſays theſe are the foundation, as ſtoutly and as confidently as you denied them ſo to be before; and theſe he ſaith he will not lay again, *Not laying again the foundation of Repentance, &c. Heb.*6.1. but will go on to perfection; though we doubt not but he intended no leſs but that Chriſt was the chief Corner-ſtone, the foundation of all theſe Principles and firſt Rudiments of Chriſtianity. He then concludes that they ought not to lay the foundation again, but to leave them, and to go on to perfection; and if they did not go on unto perfection, but fall from the foundation they had laid, there would be no renewing them again unto Repentance, no laying the foundation the ſecond time.

Aud then you argue again, *If then the faith and obedience mentioned* Heb.6. *be the Gold, Silver, and precious Stones, that we build upon this foundation, according to* 1 Cor.3.12. *and not the foundation it ſelf,* &c.

If it be as you ſay, is not laying on of hands, which is among them, neither Gold, Silver, nor a precious Stone? If not, it muſt be Wood, Hay, Stubble; and yet you ſay the Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* ſays it is a Foundation; but it is the Foundation, we ſay, with Jeſus Chriſt, himſelf being the Chief Corner-ſtone

on

on which the Christian Church is built, *Ephes.* 2.20. Then it follows, except this foundation be laid, all and every part of it, the House can never be; though where the foundation is laid, there are other things without which the House may be, though not so well and compleatly be. And in like manner we say, This Foundation *Heb.*6. and every Principle of it, the belief and practice of, is absolutely necessary to the being of Gods House; and yet there are other things, the belief and practice of, is necessary to the further edification of Gods House, without which, it cannot so well be. And since here we seem in some sort to agree, you had done well if you had told us what in your opinion those things are, without which the House of God can never be; seeing you say that Repentance and Faith, *&c.* are no parts of the foundation of Christianity; and how Christ can be laid the Foundation, and those Principles and Foundations mentioned *Heb.*6. neither believed nor practised.

But not to dwell any longer on this, our answer to your last demand in this Question, is, That the House cannot be, except the Foundation be laid in whole, not in part; and laying on of hands on all baptised Disciples, being one Principle of the Foundation, must be necessary to its being; without which, a Church rightly constituted can never be. And this we have

proved,

proved, whether you will believe it, or no. And therefore we are not guilty of Schism in making a Separation from you.

Queſt. 26.

We demand, Why that laying on of hands, Heb. 6. *which you ſay is called a foundation, may not be figuratively underſtood for the holy Spirit which was given thereby, and which they were ſaid to partake of,* verſ. 4. *the Gift whereof was a great ſupport to the profeſſion of the Chriſtian Faith, and for that reaſon the Doctrine of the Spirit might there be underſtood for one of the Doctrines of Chriſt, which he taught his Diſciples once and again, before his departure from them? We demand why may not this be ſo, ſince the Scripture doth uſually ſpeak after this manner, putting the Cup for the Wine contained in it; and the Bread and Wine, for the Body and Blood of Chriſt, which are but the means by which the Body and Blood of Chriſt are commemorated; in like manner men are ſaid to be Enemies to the Croſs of Chriſt, when they ſlight thoſe advantages that acrue to the world, which he obtained by his ſuffering thereupon? And whether that laying on of hands,* Heb. 6. *may not by the ſame figure of ſpeaking, be put for the reception of the Spirit, which was ſo neceſſary to the firſt eſtabliſhing a Chriſtian Church?* Heb. 2. 3, 4. How ſhall we eſcape, if we neglect ſo great Salvation, which at the firſt began to be ſpoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him? God alſo bearing them witneſs,

witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the holy Ghost, according to his own will.

Answer.

1. Before you said, *Laying on of hands was no foundation*; and now here you demand, *Why that laying on of hands*, Heb. 6. *which we say is called a Foundation, may not figuratively be understood for the holy Spirit that was given thereby?* We perceive you would be content it should be nothing, or any thing, but what it is said by the Spirit of God to be.

And again, you demand, *Why this may not be so, seeing the Scripture doth usually speak after this manner; putting the Cup for the Wine contained in it; and the Bread and Wine, for the Body and Blood of Christ, which are but the means by which the Body and Blood of Christ are commemorated?*

2. Well, for Argument-sake, what if we should say it may be so understood? We hope you will not say, Though we are to take the Wine for the Cup, that the Cup is not by institution to be used, as a decent and necessary means to convey the Wine to our mouths, that so we may drink the Wine: And so though the Bread and Wine be taken for the Body and Blood of Christ, and are but the means to commemorate his Body and Blood; yet we hope you will allow us to use the Bread and Wine, as the means to commemorate the Lords Body and Blood,

Blood, and not reject it, and cast it off as useless. So in like manner, if laying on of hands be a figurative speech, and understood for the Spirit that was given thereby; we hope you must allow that laying on of hands ought to be used and practised, as the means by which the Spirit was obtained, and is given, as well as you will the Cup, and the Bread and Wine, in your figurative instances, and we desire no more.

3. But we further say, That laying on of hands is not figurative, but is a plain practical Ordinance, joyned with solemn and fervent Prayer to the most High, in the Name of Christ, for his holy Spirit, that according to his faithful and never-failing promise, them that believe and are baptised in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, might receive the Spirit; by which, as the means, the Spirit was given to some of the Baptised in the *primitive times*, in more than an ordinary manner, and was necessary to the establishing Christian Churches; than which extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit given then, is a confirmation to us now, that not only the other Principles of the Doctrine of Christ are to be believed and practised, but this in debate also, as one Principle of the Foundation of Christianity, God having confirmed them all to be the Word spoken, and Foundation-Doctrine taught by the Lord, bearing witness to them, both with Signs and Wonders, and divers Miracles, and

Gifts

Gifts of the holy Ghost, according to his own will; and then *how shall we escape, if we neglect so great Salvation?* Heb. 2. 3, 4.

Quest. 27.

If you shall say, That simply the Act and Ceremony it self as you practise it, is put for a Foundation Doctrine of Christ; then we demand, Whether the Apostles ever taught any thing for a Doctrine of Christ, whereof we do not read Christ did either preach or practise before his Ascension? And if you say, That Christ did teach and practise laying on of hands upon all Disciples, both Men and Women, before his Ascension, or any thing from which such a practice may be inferred, pray shew it, and we will believe it.

Answer.

1. We say, That Prayer and Laying on of hands, as we practise it, is a Principle of the Doctrine of Christ, one of the first Rudiments of Christianity.

But you demand, Whether the Apostles ever taught any thing for a Doctrine of Christ, whereof we do not read Christ did either preach or practise before his Ascension.

2. What is it to the purpose when Christ taught laying on of hands, whether before his Passion, or after; or before his Ascention, or after by his Spirit? It sufficeth he did teach it, for it is one of the Principles of his Doctrine: And can it be a Principle of his Doctrine, and

he

he not teach it? We are certain it cannot: And taught it was likewise by his Apostles, for a Doctrine-Principle, and an Oracle of God, *Heb.*5. 12. & 6.1. and they did not only teach, but practise it also, *Act.*8.17.& 19.6. And do you think they would both teach and practise it, and never receive it from Christ, but must invent it themselvs? We cannot believe you do so think: Then was it taught by Christ, and taught and practised by his Apostles, as a foundation-Principle. And that sufficeth us, and might you, if you were willing and obedient. See this answered before, in *Christs Doctrine*, p.58.

Quest. 28.

If laying on of hands upon all baptised Believers be to be practised in your sence, as an indispensable Duty; then we demand, Why all the other Principles in Heb.6. *should be expresly and particularly commanded, believed, or practised in Christs time, and not this, as it is practised by you, if there be that weight in it, as you lay upon it? &c.*

Answer.

1. If laying on of hands (say you) upon all baptised Believers, be to be practised in our sence, as an indispensable Duty; then you demand, Why all the other Principles, *Heb.*6. should be expresly commanded, believed, and practised in Christs time, and not this, as it is practised by us, if there be that weight in it as we lay upon it? We told you above, that it matters

matters not when Christ taught laying on of hands, whether in the time of his Life, or not. And whereas you say, *That Faith, and Repentance, the Baptism of Water, the Resurrection of the Dead, and eternal Judgement, were in Christs time plainly taught:* Pray where did Christ in the time of his Life, before his Ascension, or after it either, so plainly command baptising with water? Though we do not deny but there was both Faith, Repentance, the Resurrection, and eternal Judgement, plainly enough taught, according to that Dispensation; and so they were before Christs Incarnation, by the Prophets of old; nor do we deny, but grant, that there was Authority enough from Heaven for the Baptism of Water then practised; and that there was them that did fore-tell that the holy Spirit should be afterwards given, and so it was by the Prophet *Joel*; all which were as preparatives to what afterward Christ should command and teach, when he had suffered and was risen, and all power in Heaven and Earth was given unto him, *Mat.* 28. 18. So *John* was sent to prepare the way, and he taught the Baptism of Repentance, saying, They should believe on him that was to come; so that between both the Faith and the Baptism then, and that after Christ was come, had suffered, ascended, and the holy Ghost was given, there must needs be a vast difference; therefore (as you affirm) *Paul*

baptised

baptised the twelve Disciples he found at *Ephesus* again, because they were onely baptised into *John's* Baptism; who, as was his Baptism, so was his Doctrine of Faith and Repentance: *John verily baptised with the Baptism of Repentance, saying to the People, That they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus*, Act. 19.4. From whence, or from which Dispensation, we do not take the Authority of the Foundation-Doctrine of Christ, no not of Repentance, Faith, Baptisms, Laying on of hands, Refurrection, and eternal Judgement; but from Christ dead, risen, and ascended to the Father, from whom he sent his holy Spirit to confirm them all to be his Doctrine, on which he hath built his Church: Yet might these Principles be (nay doubtless were) left and commanded by Christ before his Ascension, which they better understood and put in practice, when they were endowed with power from on high *Acts* 2. by the Spirit of Truth, which Christ sent to them, to guide them into all Truth, *John* 16,13. and of them whom Christ commanded by word of mouth to observe and teach these Principles, have we received them, as the Doctrine of the Lord Jesus; of which Doctrine laying on of hands on baptised Believers, is such, is one Principle, taught also by the Apostles, and by them practised, *Acts* 8.17. & 19. And if we do not find it was practised in the

of Christs life, that doth not make invalid what was taught and practised after his Ascension; He had many things to say in the time of his life, his Disciples could not then bear, *John* 16.12. which he promiseth to instruct them in by his Spirit, *vers.* 13,14,15.

2. It being then clear, that laying on of hands is a Principle of the Doctrine of Christ; it's not to the thing in hand where, when, or how Christ taught it; but that you will study doubts rather than obedience. And whereas you speak of the Doctrine of the holy Spirit, if the Truth were known, you as little believe it, as you practise laying on of hands for the reception of it, as will appear hereafter. Concluding from what hath been said, That laying on of hands is as clear a Principle of Christs Doctrine, as any of the other are, having the same Authority; we refuse, and keep no communion with the Disobedient.

Quest. 29.

If you say, The practice of the Apostles, Act. 8. 17. *plainly shews that they had a Command for what they did; We thereupon demand, Though we read they baptised Men and Women promiscuously, yet where do you read they ever laid hands promiscuously upon Men and Women? If you shall say, It is implied in the word* THEM, *which the Apostles laid their hands upon, which were the same* THEM *that* Philip *baptised; we demand, Whether*

that it may not be as truly said that Philip *preached to every Man and Woman in* Samaria, *because it is said,* He went to the City of Samaria, and preached Christ to them? *verſ.* 5. *And whether it may not be as well ſaid, That every Man and Woman in* Samaria *believed and were baptiſed, becauſe it is ſaid, That* Samaria had received the Word of God, and was baptized; *as you may ſay, That becauſe the Church of Jeruſalem ſent unto* Them Peter *and* John, *to lay hands on* Them, *that therefore it muſt be underſtood they laid hands on every baptiſed Man and Woman?* &c.

Anſwer.

1. We do ſay the practice of the Apoſtles, *Act.* 8. 17. and elſewhere, doth plainly ſhew that they had received a Command from Chriſt for what they did; and ſo muſt you ſay, unleſs you will ſay it was their own humane invention. And if you think it was practiſed by them, without command from Chriſt, and ſo their own invention, why do you not ſay ſo? But if you think they had received ſufficient Authority from Chriſt for what they did, why do you make oppoſition againſt their practice, and refuſe to follow them, as they followed Chriſt, and keep thoſe traditions they delivered.

2. But you demand, *Though we read that they baptiſed both Men and Women promiſcuouſly, yet where do we read they ever laid hands promiſcuouſly upon Men and Women?*

We

We say it is in so many words said, *Act.* 8. 12. they were baptised, both Men and Women; and no less plain it is, that *Peter* and *John* prayed and laid their hands upon them, both Men and Women. For by as good reason may one conclude that *Peter* and *John* were sent by the rest of the Apostles but to some of them that believed and were baptised at *Samaria*, as to conclude that *Peter* and *John* prayed for, and laid hands on, but some of them. Nor can it be as well said that *Philip* preached to every Man and Woman in *Samaria*, because it is said that *Philip* went down to the City of *Samaria*, and preached Christ unto them; not every Man and Woman in *Samaria* believed and were baptised, though it be said *Samaria* had received the Word: the former being true, though he had preach'd but to twenty; and the latter, though but six believed and were baptised. And to conclude all in *Samaria* were preached to, believed, and were baptised, were not logical indeed; but to conclude that *Peter* and *John* prayed for, and laid hands on the Women that *Philip* baptised, as well as they prayed for, and laid their hands on the Men he baptised, is Scriptural and Logical; because the Women had equal right to the Gift of the Spirit (which was the end of that service) by vertue of Gods Promise made to them, as well as to men, *Joel* 2.28,29. *Act.* 2.17,18. Then is it Scriptural

and Logical, to conclude that the baptised Women had equal right to the means by which the Spirit was given, as well as the baptised Men.

3. So that the Truth is, (whereas you say, *That we are so far from having a Command for laying on of hands on all baptised Believers, that we have not a plain Example for it*) you are so far from knowing and believing the Truth, that you will not see any Command there is, nor Example neither, for laying on of hands on baptised Believers, as such, that you still remain contradicting, and putting it from you; thereby judging your selves unworthy of the blessing of Gods holy and guiding Spirit, which to his praise is receiv'd thereby: There being both Command and plain Example from the Apostles; which Command they received from Christ, and Christ from God his Father. See this answered before, in *Gods Oracle*, page 47,48,49.

4. But you say, *Dr. Hamond questioneth which laying on of hands is here intended, and saith it is probable it was upon Disciples, for the Gift of the Spirit; and doth confess there is a difficulty to resolve whether it be for the laying on of hands for Confirmation or Ordination.*

Dr. *Hamond* and you might conclude that it was not for Ordination, had you but consulted *Paul* to *Timothy*, when he saith, *A Novice must*

not

not be chosen or ordained a Bishop, lest being lifted up with pride, he fall into the condemnation of the Devil, 1 Tim. 3, 6. Then could not *Peter* and *John* lay hands on the Baptised at *Samaria* for Ordination, because they were but of yesterday, newly come to the Faith. Moreover the very end of their laying on of hands was, *That they might receive the holy Ghost*, Act. 8, 15. Now had your learned and judicious Doctor considered these things, he would not have said it was difficult to resolve whether the laying on of hands, *Act.* 8, 17. was for Confirmation or Ordination.

5. But we perceive the Authority of this Doctor goes very far with you, that you will believe when he believes, and doubt of what he doubts: That if he had said there is a Command for laying on of hands, and a plain Example, peradventure you would say so too. For you say, *And therefore though laying on of hands as we practise it, be true; yet it is not so infallibly true, because it depends upon our Exposition.* If you had drawn your conclusion right, from what was before premised by you, it must have been thus: *Therefore though laying on of hands as we practise it, be true; yet it is not infallibly true, because Dr.* Hamond *is at a stand about it, and saith it is difficult to resolve whether it be for Confirmation or Ordination*: and not say, *Because it depends upon our Exposition*, which it doth not; for we have

plain words and practice for it, in the Scripture, there being from this Text, *Act.* 8. 17. plain and clear Example for laying on of hands both on Men and Woman, and not conjectural and guess'd at; we have good reason to divide from you about it.

Quest. 30

Suppose we had a plain Example that they laid hands on Men and Women promiscuously, this being but an Example, and no Command preceding it; how could it become binding, so as to give you a ground to separate about it?

Answer.

We have plain example without supposition, that the Apostles laid on hands both on Men Women; yet you say, *This being but an Example, and no Command preceding it, how could it become binding, so as to give us ground to separate about it.*

How uncharitable (to say no worse) do you here secretly charge the Apostles with practising that for which they had received no Command from Christ to practise? What unfaithfulness were it for them to set up their post by their Lord and Masters? And if they were so unfaithful in one thing, how can we give them so much credit as to believe and follow them in any thing? But we firmly believe, and make no doubt (though you beg the question, by concluding they had no Command to warrant what

they

they did) but they had a Command from Christ for what they did, when they laid hands on the baptised Believers in *Samaria*, or they had never put it in practise, and left it upon Record for future Ages to read, as we could abundantly prove, against all such Quarrels you or any other shall pick with them. You still give more ground to separate about it.

Quest. 31.

But if you shall say the Apostle Paul *did lay hands upon the Disciples of* Ephesus, Act. 19. *and therefore it was surely commanded; we demand whether* Paul *did not also baptise the same persons after they had been baptized into* John's *Baptism, as appears he did,* vers. 5. *and why should not his baptizing them again be a Fundamental Doctrine, since the Doctrine of* BAPTISMS *is as much a Fundamental Doctrine, as laying on of hands?* Heb. 6. 2.

And why may you not as well produce the Apostles Example, Act. 19. *for the Explication of the Doctrine of Baptisms,* Heb. 6. *seeing he baptised those that had been baptised before, and so baptise all our Members again, that come to you; as produce this Example for the explaining the Doctrine of laying on of hands?*

We demand then what can be inferred from hence to prove it an unquestionable Duty? And if not, why should you divide about it?

Answer.

1. We do say the Apostle *Paul* did lay on hands upon the Disciples at *Ephesus*, Act. 19. and therefore it was surely commanded him, and so us, *Phil.* 3.17. & 4.8,9. that have believed on Christ through their word, *John* 17. 20. You then demand whether *Paul* did not also baptise the same persons, after they had been baptised into *John*'s Baptism? And then you answer your selves, and say, It appears he did, vers. 5.

And then you ask, *Why should not his baptizing them again be a Fundamental Doctrine, since the Doctrine of Baptisms is as much a Fundamental Doctrine as laying on of hands?* Heb. 6.2.

We do not say but his baptising them again was a Fundamental Doctrine.

2. But then you enquire, *Why we may not as well produce the Apostles example*, Acts 19. *for the explication of the Doctrine of Baptisms*, Heb. 6. *seeing he baptised those that had been baptised before?*

When we meet with the same case, we shall have occasion to make use of that example to explain the Doctrine of Baptisms, *Heb.* 6. till then, we need not.

Then you further say, *And so baptise all your Members again that come to us, as produce this Example for the explaining the Doctrine of laying on of hands.*

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Had your Members known no more than the Baptism of *John*, and had been baptised into *John's* Baptism; we should have baptised them all again; but as they profest, and we believed, they were baptised in the Name of the Lord Jesus, we had no reason to baptise them again, and so no occasion to produce that Example, to explicate the Doctrine of Baptisms; *Heb.*6. as we have of laying on of hands.

And from this Example of *Paul's* laying on of hands on the twelve Disciples he found at *Ephesus*, Act.19. we infer that he, as well as *Peter* and *John*, Act.8. had Christs Doctrine for his practice; and that therefore it is an unquestionable Duty. We have then good reason to divide from you about it.

Quest.32.

We demand where-ever you read of the practice of laying on of hands by Christians, before the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit were given, to enable for the Work of the Ministry? If you say it was practised before, then we desire that you would shew us where it was practised?

And if it was not practised it was either because it was not commanded before, or else it must needs be that they were all negligent of their Duty, which is uncharitable to conceive; or else it must needs be that though Christ did command it, yet they were to suspend their practise of it till they had received the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit. If

you

you say it was commanded before Christ did ascend, but the practice was suspended during the absence of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, because there was no reason why the Apostles should lay hands on others, in order to the reception of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, when they had not received those Gifts themselves.

Then we further demand, If that laying on of hands could be proved a Command in the sense you contend for, whether we may not be excused from either doing or receiving of it NOW, while the extraordinary Gifts are absent, both from him that administers it, and they that receive it?

But if you shall say, This Objection lieth against Baptism, as well as laying on of hands; then we demand how that can be? Since Baptism was practised before the extraordinary Gifts were given, so was not this laying on of hands: Baptism was administred by them that never did Miracles, so was not laying on of hands: Again, Baptism was practised on them that had received the Gifts of the holy Ghost before they were baptised; but where do you read of any that having first received the holy Ghost before laying on of hands, that afterward had laying on of hands administred unto them? So that till this doubt be removed, what ground have you to divide about it?

Answer.

1. What if we grant that laying on of hands was not practised before the Spirit was given by

which they were endowed with power from high, to put in practise laying on of hands, and all other practical Duties? And what if we say that laying on of hands, and also other duties that were commanded by Christ after his Ascension, and before his Ascension, were all suspended till the Apostles were endowed with power from on high, and during the absence of the Spirit; yet not for the reason you give, but for reasons we have and shall give, when they shall meet with due place.

2. That there is a Command for laying on of hands, is sufficiently proved, and therefore our not receiving it Now, though the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit be absent, will not be excused. Let us unfold this Mystery: For you hereby secretly conclude, that they that administred laying on of hands then, had the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit; but no man hath the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit now; therefore we may be excused from receiving laying on of hands now. We say if this be good reason, it will lay aside, as not practical, the whole Doctrine of Christ, thus: They that preached Repentance and Faith, the Doctrine of Baptisms, and Laying on of Hands, the Resurrection of the Dead, and eternal Judgement, men, had received the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit: No man hath the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit now: Therefore all men

may

may be excused from preaching and from h
ing the Doctrine of Repentance, Faith,
the Doctrine of Baptisms, of Laying o
hands, the Resurrection of the Dead, and e
nal Judgement, now: And what is the tend
cy of such reasoning, but Infidelity and A
ism? And whereas you think to be excused f
laying on of hands, because the extraordin
Gifts of the Spirit are not given now; we
that will not excuse you before Christ at his
pearing, because you crave excuse upon a f
bottom; supposing that the extraordinary G
of the Spirit was the onely end of the pra
of the laying on of hands; yet was it not,
the reception of the Spirit only was as a c
mon end assigned, *Act.* 8. 15. of prayer and
ing on of hands, and not this or that Gift the
of, ordinary or extraordinary: Though it's t
the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit were gi
upon prayer & laying on of hands; God app
ing so eminently in that Appointment, did b
witness & confirm it to be part of that word
ken by the Lord, *Heb.* 2. 4. yet was those Gifts
ver propounded as the end of laying on of ha
no more than they were promised to them
obeyed Christ by repenting, and being bapti
in his name, *Act.* 2. 38, 39. & 5. 32. T
though the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit
not now given, that will not excuse your
obedience to Christ, in not doing or recei

...w. And truly the reason (if we may so ...l it) that you make your Plea, doth lie against ...ism, and all other Gospel-Duties, as we ...ed before.

But then you demand, *How that can be, since ...ism was practised before the extraordinary ...ts were given?*

We say the Baptism of *John* was practised be... the extraordinary Gifts were given.

But then you say, *Baptism was administred by ...that never did miracles, so was not Laying on Hands.*

We grant you *John* baptised and did no mira...; but how do you know laying on of hands ...not administred by them that never did mi...les? What miracle did *Ananias* do?

...9.

Again, you say, *Baptism was practised on them ...had received the Gifts of the holy Ghost before ...were baptised; but where do we read of any ...having first received the holy Ghost before lay... of hands, that afterward had laying on of ...s administred to them?*

We say that neither we nor you read that any ...received the Spirit before laying on of ...was first administred to them, saving *Cor...* and his houshold, *Act.*10. who indeed ...ived the Gifts of the holy Ghost before ...ism, or laying on of hands either; but ...t then? What if the like instance is not to

be

be read, the Scripture being silent in the Ca
whether *Cornelius* and his Houshold had lay
on of hands administred to them? Will
lessen the Authority of any part of the D
ctrine of Christ, and make void and null
Apostolical and Primitive Practice?

Further, Though what you demand is not to
read, yet let us tell you that what you say w
lie as full in the reason of it against Baptism,
you conceit it doth against laying on of han
because the Gift of the Spirit in the promise
it, is annexed to Baptism, as the Gift of
Spirit was assigned in laying on of hands, as
end of it: Now *Cornelius* and his Houshold
no reason to be baptised in Water, because th
had first received and possessed that, which wh
baptised they could not lay claim to any thi
more than the promise of; no reason, we se
but the Authority of the Lord Jesus, who
commanded it: And therefore though they
received the Spirit before they were baptise
yet must they be baptised in Water, in obe
ence to Christs Doctrine and Command. So
like manner, if *Cornelius* and his Houshold m
be baptised, though he had first received the S
rit, which God had annexed the promise of
Baptism; then must they be bound in Duty
well to submit to laying on of hands, tho
the Spirit be assigned as the end thereof,
they had first received the Gift of the Sp
bef

before laying on of hands, from the same reason of obedience to Christs Doctrine and Command, though we do not read it was administred unto them.

4. But what is this to your Case? Do any of you pretend to have such a measure of the Spirit as *Cornelius* had; or so much, you need not that any should administer laying on of hands, that you might have more, and so think to be excused doing or receiving it? Or do you doubt whether it be your Duty to practise it, because the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit are now absent? Your Doubts now being removed, we have the same ground left we ever had, to divide from you about it, till you shall remove our ground by doing and receiving it.

Quest. 33.

Whether it be not uncharitable for you to say we oppose or deny laying on of hands, because for the reasons implied in the former Questions, we question your practise of it, with respect to its being a Duty incumbent upon all Disciples? May you not as well say, That those people that believe not that Christ died for all, do deny the Death of Christ, because they do not believe he hath died for all; as you may say we deny laying on of hands a Duty, because we do not believe it a Duty for every Man and Woman that is baptised? And may you not as well say, They denied the Priestly Office of Christ, that were ignorant of many things that related

lated thereunto, as say that we oppose a Doctrine of Christ, because we are ignorant of something relating to it, which for the reasons implied in the former question, we cannot yet understand? And further, may we not as truly say, Many of you deny Christ, and so have not God, because they deny he took Flesh of the Virgin Mary, as say we deny the Doctrine of Christ, because we deny, or rather doubt, of laying on of hands on all Disciples, Men and Women, as you practise it?

Answer.

1. To say the Truth, is not to be uncharitable; and when we say you oppose or deny laying on of hands, as you have done more than twenty years, is not to be (we hope) uncharitable: For that laying on of hands we practise you do deny and oppose, though you may colour your opposition under the pretence of doubts and questions, and under the pretence of owning laying on of hands to heal the Sick or to set Men apart to Office in the Church, though not on all baptised Men and Women that they might receive the Spirit: Nor is your reason by which you would wipe off that blemish sufficient, for we may not as well say that those people which believe not that Christ died for all, do deny the Death of Christ; because they do believe he died, and died for them, and more too: But you do not believe that laying on of hands on baptised Believers as such,

...y might receive the Spirit, is the duty of ...y.

2. Neither can it be said, that the Hebrew Church denied the Priestly Office of Christ, because they were dull of hearing, and could not receive those great Mysteries thereof that were hard to be uttered, *Heb.* 5. 11. And though you pretend you are ignorant, yet we think you would not take it well should we set you down for such. And as for what you may say, say your pleasure; and say if you will, many of us (if you say true) deny Christ took flesh of the Virgin *Mary*: We can say, and say truth, that many of you deny Christ, and have not God, because you deny him to be God of one Substance with the Father; and say that he is a created being, and took his beginning in the Womb of the Virgin, besides your denying laying on of Hands on all Disciples, Men and Women, as we practise.

Quest. 34.

Did you ever come to us, or send any to us, to lay Hands upon us, and we rejected you? why then would you reject us?

Answer.

When we first received laying on of Hands, we were with you, and continued reasoning, and perswading you to receive the truth; but you then opposed us, and it; yea, and at length hardned and believed not, but spake evil

of the way, and then we departed and separated from you; and know no reason we have to come, or send to you to lay Hands on you, except you repent, and receive the truth candidly in the love of it, until then we have reason to reject you.

Quest. 35.

Do we not practise laying on of hands upon Officers, and are not many willing to submit to it as Members for peace and accommodation sake, and together with you wait upon God for further light in this matter? why then should you impose believing of it on us as a Command upon all Disciples both Men and Women: I, and such a Command as is essential to Communion and Church-membership when you have no such Command nor Example in all the Scriptures, either that it was practised upon Men and Women that were Baptized, or that it was judged essential to Communion, or that it was ever practised, but on the account of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, or that it was ever administred on any, if they had received the gifts of the Spirit before?

Till these sober Scruples are removed, and the Duty of Laying on of Hands proved essential to Communion, what ground have you to refuse Communion with us?

Answer.

We know not whether you practise laying on of Hands upon Officers or no; but if you

do, what Command have you for it? Nor are those terms for peace and accommodation take sufficient, Christ hath no need to be beholding to you; Where do you read that any were received to, or practised any Gospel Ordinance upon those terms? We must therefore, if you receive it from us, impose it upon you as a Command upon all Disciples both Men and Women, because it is so, as appears *Acts* 8. for the Apostles practised no more, in Holy and Divine Adoration and Invocation, than what they were taught and commanded by their Lord and Master Christ to do; yea, and such a Command (or rather Duty) it is, that is essential to Communion, and Church-membership, he having both Command and Example in the Scripture, as we have shewed; and it would be but reiteration to shew it here again, not as it practised upon the account of the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, the Scripture do where assigning them as the end there-

2. And if the Scripture be silent in the case of Laying on of Hands on *Cornelius* and his House, it doth not follow but that he did receive laying on of Hands after he had received the Spirit, as well as his being Baptised in Water after he had received the Spirit, there being the same weighty and pressing reasons for both, *viz.* Christ's Doctrine and Com-

mand. We do not know when you will say your sober Scruples are removed: for Laying on of Hands is proved to be essential to Communion; therefore we have ground to refuse Communion with you.

Quest. 36.

Are you not divided among your selves in this matter? have not some of you said Laying on of Hands was for Confirmation? Others, that it was for the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit? Others, that it was for the Spirit in any measure?

Answer.

We know not any that saith, That Laying on of Hands was for the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit, but you and others of your mind; and if some do say that Laying on of Hands is for the receiving the Spirit in any measure; and others will say it was for Confirmation; there is not much difference between them: we say then, we are not divided among our selves about laying on of Hands.

Quest. 37.

Have not others of you both Printed and Preached, that Laying on of Hands is one of the seven Pillars that Wisdom builded her house upon, Prov. 9. 1. *and may not the Church of* Rome *as well prove her seven Sacraments from hence, as you prove Laying on of Hands? Besides, do you not by thus expounding the Word of God create seven Principles instead of six you talk of? and may*

must as well say that because the New Jerusalem *Wall had twelve Foundations, that therefore the Church must have twelve Fundamentals, without which she cannot be a Church communicable?*

Is not this making the Word of God like the Lesbian *Rule, who having built crooked and irregular, so as the Work was not conformable to the Rule, went and made their Rule conformable to their Work?*

Answer.

1. What if some of us have from those Pillars Wisdom builded her house upon, *Prov.* 9. 1. alluded to the Foundation Doctrine of Christ, *Heb.* 6. 1, 2. and of the Apostles, *Eph.* 2. 20. But if you shall say that *Heb.* 6. 1, 2. makes mention but of six Principles, and *Prov.* 9. 1. mentions seven Pillars; we hope you that say Christ is the Foundation, and those Principles cannot be a Foundation, nor no part of the Foundation of Christianity, will not be against it, if some of us do say, that Christ being the Chief Corner-stone in that Foundation, *Heb.* 6. and so that text, *Prov.* 9. 1. may allude to seven.

2. And pray, is there not as good a harmony and analogy between *Prov.* 9. 1. & *Heb.* 6. 1. and *Ephes.* 2. 20. as you can have ground of proof from *Numb.* 18. 19, 22, 23. and *Deut.* 34. 9. That the Apostles, in divers cases, laid on Hands, not in conformity to a Com-

mand, but by way of accommodation to the laudable Customs of the *Jewes*, as in your 23*d Question* you do.

3. You go about to prove from those places and conclude the Apostles did so; but who do you know either by Printing or Preaching, undertake to prove that laying on of hands is Commanded, or is a Duty, to be practised from *Prov.* 9. 1. as you do to prove the other from those places mentioned above; something might be offered from thence as is aforesaid, and by way of illustration. Then is your talk but idle about *Romes* seven Sacraments and the twelve Foundations of *Jerusalem* Wall, and your *Lesbian* Rule; for who would make the Rule conform to the Work more than you, which have built your house irregularly, and crooked, and, so would if you could tell how, have the Word, which is the Rule, conform to your Work.

Quest. 38.

And whereas the Scripture tells us of several laying on of hands, and we have oftentimes demanded how you prove that the laying on of hands as practised by you, is that spoke of in Heb. 6. *you answer, if we would have a proof in so many words that saith such a laying on of hands, as you practise is there mentioned, we must seek one our selves, for you have none; then we demand, whether you are not very uncharitable to exclude any from*

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Communion of Gods Church, because they cannot see that to be a Duty, which you have no plain Text for the proof of, by your own Confession?

Answer.

1. As often as you have demanded, how we prove that the laying on of hands we practise, is that meant *Heb.* 6. so often you have been answered; but you may well blush for shame, that so falsly render what we have said in this matter. Do we say, as you conclude, that we have no plain Text to prove laying on of hands to be a Duty? where or when did any of us ever say so? You quote indeed *Gods Oracle and Christs Doctrine*, page 52. but 'tis page the 53. and there let the most prejudiced Reader use but reason, see and judge whether you are not most injurious to the truth and us; and let any impartial Reader weigh well what is said before, in that Book, and they will find we have sufficiently proved, that the laying on of Hands on baptised Believers, as such, is that laying on of hands, mentioned *Heb.* 6. there said to be a Foundation-Principle.

2. It is true, there is no Text that doth say in so many words, that that laying on of hands *Heb.* 6. is the laying on of hands to heal the sick, nor that to set men apart to Office in the Church, nor that it is Laying on of Hands on baptised Believers; What then? Christ saith,

Go teach all Nations, baptizing them, Matth. 28. 19. And the Scripture mentions several Baptisms; and there be some that deny Baptism of Water; where have you a Text that in so many words will say, That the Baptism of Water which you practise, is the Baptism Christ commanded, *Mat.* 28. 19. You must confess you have none; and can it be fairly & honestly concluded that therefore you have no plain Text for the proof of your practice, as you do by us; let the Reader consult *Gods Oracle and Christs Doctrine* from page 44. to page 54. where it is sufficiently proved, That the laying on of hands mentioned *Heb.* 6. is the laying on of hands on baptised Believers, practised by the Apostles, *Acts* 8. 17. and 19. 6. Then are we not uncharitable, though we exclude you from the Communion of Gods Church, because you do not do your Duty, which we have plain Texts, and sound Reason for the proof of.

Quest. 39.

And whereas you say the Apostles practice must expound the 6th of the Hebrews *in this case as well as in Water-Baptism; we answer so it shall. But then where did they lay hands on Women, and where did they Command laying on of hands in the Name of the Lord Jesus, as they did in Baptism,* Acts 12. 8. Acts 10. 47 48. *and where did they lay hands Q N any, after they had received the gifts of the Spirit? but we do find they Baptized*

tized them afterwards, I, and Commanded such to submit to it in the Name of the Lord Jesus: produce us the like Instances, and you say something.

Answer.

If the Apostles practice shall expound *Heb.* 6. as well as in the case of Baptism, Then have you never a Text in all the Scripture that will in so many words say, Christ meant Water-baptism, when he saith, *Go teach all Nations, baptizing them*, but must expound the Commission by their practice, and then how unworthily have you done by the Truth, concluding as you do in the 38. *Question*: But then, instead of doing what you say the Apostles practice shal expound, you leave the matter, and ask where they laid hands on Women: Why we told you that before, & you may read *Acts* 8. and then you ask, where they Commanded laying on of hands in the Name of Christ? We will leave that to you to determine in whose Name the Apostles did it and commanded it; & then you ask, where did they lay on hands on any after they received the gifts of the Spirit? though we have answered this twice before, but you never spoke one word to that Case you so falsly render; and then it falsly conclude, that we confess we have no plain Text for the proof of laying on of hands, but bid us produce the like Instances, and we say something. Suppose there be not

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the like Instances to be produced in all occasi
nal Circumstances, or otherwise in Baptism
Water, as is in those Principles of Faith a
Repentance; will all that can be said for
Baptism of Water be nothing, except the
can be produced as many Instances agreeing
all respects to Baptism as agrees in expressi
of terms to Repentance and Faith? if so, a
if Baptism of Water be no Duty except as
foresaid; you will not be able, nor none el
to give such proof for water Baptism, nor fo
other practice you will own to enforce the d
of it on any that shall oppose you. W
having said then so much for laying on of ha
as you will never be able to un-say from Scr
ture or Reason; nor can answer, except it
by granting it to be by Scripture proved a Fo
dation-Principle of Christs Doctrine, and
cordingly submit to it upon Christs terms,
then you will not onely say, but do so
thing.

Quest. 40.

Again, whereas you have both Preached
Printed that you cannot prove laying on of ha
as you practise it, any otherwise than by Infer
and Deductions; how can you be so daringly
fident as to call those things Gods Oracles and
sentials of Religion, that are but your interp
tions of Scripture, unless with the Church of Ro
you will say the Church cannot err?

Not but that we believe many profitable truths may be collected and infer'd by consequence from Scripture, And Conjectures (as one well observes) if mannerly observing their distance; and not impudently obtruding themselves, for certainties, deserve (if not to be received) to be considered.

So that if Laying on of Hands in your sense should be a truth, yet it being but conjecturally so; We Query, why it should be advanced into the number of those expreſs Duties which are essential to Salvation and Church Communion?

Answer.

How can you be so daringly impudent as to forge such an untruth, and say that we have both Preached, and Printed, that we cannot prove laying on of hands as we practise it, otherwise then by Inferences and Deductions? where is such a thing Printed, or who ever Preached so, that hath not turned back to his vomit, in some degree, or hath not out-lived his love to those Principles he had received, and was once built on? May you not be ashamed of this, when we have again and again, by Printing, Preaching, and otherwise, proved laying on of hands, as we practise it, to be a Foundation-Principle of Christs Doctrine, by plain and uninterpreted Scripture, and without Inferences and Deductions, as fully as any Duty that is practical, can be proved without them,

them, and was never refuted by you yet; how then can you stand in the face of God and his Congregation when you dare do thus! Has there been upon you the feeling thoughts of those Texts, *Rev.* 21. 8. & 22. 15. you would not have brought forth such a Monster into the world; it being therefore false what you say, we dare be so confident as to call laying on of hands as we practise it, one of the first Principles of the Oracles of God, and an essential of Religion (without saying with the Church of *Rome*, the Church cannot err) (we will leave that for you to say) and with as much manners and modesty as the authority of so sacred an Ordinance will permit.

Laying on of Hands then is a Truth, and such a one as is by Christ and his Apostles (not by us) advanced (as you call it) into the number of those express Duties which are Essential to Church-Constitution and Church-Communion.

FINIS.

POST-SCRIPT.

SInce the *Searchers for Schism* did direct their *Questions* to the *Baptized Congregations* under *Laying on of Hands*, and did expect an *Answer* from them, as appears by the latter

end of their *Epistle*, it may by some be thought strange that I should undertake to *Answer* them, seing they were propounded to the above-said *Congregations* in general: That therefore which hath moved me thereunto, was partly the importunity of some Friends, it being some considerable time after I saw their *Questions* ere I had any thoughts to offer any thing in *Answer* to them (at least in so publick a manner) thinking it was more the Concern of some other of my Brethren to engage now than mine, because I had once and again appeared in Print (according to my ability) in answer to those gainsayers and opposers of *laying on of hands*; but they being silent, whose Zeal for Truth should (as I might well hope and expect) have put them with much forwardness upon the *work*, together with the *report* that went abroad how many young and weak Christians were somewhat moved and stumbled, & others that have declined (in some sort) the Truth, did boast and were encouraged, put me upon this *third Encounter*, being not well able to forbear, having to this day (praised be the Lord my God) remaining in me some love to Christ, and to that sacred and precious Word of his, *viz. Laying on of Hands*, yea, and to the souls of them who are ready to be tossed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine, and among the rest by the blast which was blown from the Bellows of those *Questions*, which their Authors pretend

pretend are for *Conscience sake*; but however, whether they were for Conscience-sake, or for Strife and Contention, this I can truly say, they are answered with good conscience to God and love to the Authors of them, that God may be glorified by their obedience, and by the establishing and confirmation of the Churches in the Doctrine of the Lord Jesus; from part of which (at least) it both hath been, and still is (the more it is to be lamented) the endeavour of some, especially the Authors of these *Queries* (who not only now, but heretofore have laboured) to trouble the peace of them which have obeyed that form of Doctrine which Christ taught, and was delivered by his Apostles to the primitive Saints.

But let my ends and aims in what I have writ be what I say they are, yea, and had I the Pen of never so ready and exquisit a Writer, yet must I not expect, nor do, but to be smitten for my love and pains, by them who bend their tongues like their bow for lyes, but are not valiant for the Truth upon the Earth, it being too commonly seen that *he which departs from iniquity makes himself a prey*, when *he that runs with a multitude to do evil shall have honour and praise*; but however I am esteemed, my comfort is I seek not the honour nor praise of men, neither do I fear the slanderous tongues of any, mine only end (as God knoweth) being their soul's eter-

eternal felicity, who shall carp at me, be it the Inquirers or others; and therefore should they reward me with evil for the good I intend them, they will in so doing wrong themselves and not me. I will then leave the issue of these *Answers* of their *Questions* to the Lord, heartily desiring that Truth and Righteousness were imbraced in sincere love, by all them that name the Name of Christ, that there may be a departing from Iniquity and Error, which is the cause of all Divisions, and then, and not till then will the Wound be healed. Had the *Searchers for Schism* then considered that their Disobedience to, and Errour in a Fundamental-Principle, is the cause why those under *Laying on of hands* can have no Communion with them (which I hope this brief *Answer* to their *Questions* may help them to see) they would not be so irrational to conclude that Schism should be found where Truth is obeyed and walked in; but that it is more likely by far to be where Error and Disobedience dwells, and such to be the Dividers who refuse to obey, but no more now: only desiring the Lord to make my poor endeavours a Blessing to the Souls of them, and all others, and then I have my End.

VALE.